

## ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



### **LESSON 52 ~ REVIEW I [Review Lessons 6-10]**

#### **Sarah's Commentary**

Each day begins now with the reading of the five ideas for the day and the comments that accompany each thought, with at least two minutes devoted to each idea. Think about each idea and related comments as often as possible during the day. If any idea particularly appeals to you, focus on that idea. Try to emphasize the central point for the idea, then spend time with your eyes closed, alone in a quiet place if possible. We are now looking at the relationships among the ideas, **". . . and the cohesiveness of the thought system to which they are leading you."** (W.PI.RI.IN.6.4)

The stages of practice we are going through are 1) initially a highly structured, quiet place with no special setting 2) until we can bring peace with us to every situation 3) then there is a recognition that peace is inherent in us 4) until finally we see peace wherever we go.

All these Lessons affirm that we don't see at all. What we call seeing is only a reflection of the thoughts that preoccupy our minds. Instead of seeing, we are projecting thoughts that are in the mind and seeing them as images in the world. In essence, we are only upset because we **". . . see what is not there."** (W.52.1.1) Thus, we experience fear because, with guilt in our minds, we expect punishment. This is why we set up defenses, either physical or psychological. We think we need protection, but Jesus reminds us, **"Reality is never frightening."** (W.52.1.2)

But to us, reality is frightening, which is why we defend against the love we are. We fear God because we think we have destroyed His Kingdom in order to set up our own, in its place. Thus, we fear God's punishment for what we believe we have done, which explains our fear of the Last Judgment. So what we do is keep ourselves distracted and listen to our own thoughts to ensure the Voice for God will be unheard. All our feelings of unworthiness come from this tiny mad idea that we have separated ourselves from love. In that process, we believe we have destroyed our own value. Now we find these feelings so painful we project them onto the world.

What we are learning is that the whole story that the ego has made up and has convinced us is the truth is just a myth. The idea that we have sinned and are therefore guilty and thus deserve punishment is all made up. Unfortunately for us, we have bought into this thought system, and it runs our lives until we no longer believe it and no longer listen to the ego's lies. This requires mind watching. It requires that we stay focused on our thoughts and recognize that the reason we are not at peace is because we are holding thoughts and beliefs that block the peace that is ours. But we have been given a way out. As we let down our defenses and take responsibility for our projections, we start the process of healing. The important thing is not to blame ourselves for our thoughts but simply see them for what they are—all coming from the ego. It is only our condemnation of ourselves that makes everyone and everything our enemies. (W.52.2.4) We are all the same Self.

When we bring our unloving thoughts to the truth within, represented by the symbol of Jesus/Holy Spirit, we realize there is only blessing, love, and light within us. The one we identify with as the "I" is not the truth of who we are. It is the false self, the character in the dream. When I accept forgiveness and healing I know I am blessed and now, ". . . **bless everyone and everything I see.**" (W.52.2.5) "**And I will look with love on all that I failed to see before.**" (W.52.2.7)

When Don first came into my life, I had my home organized exactly as I wanted it having been on my own for ten years after my husband died. After my shower, the towels had to be folded and put on the rack properly. He wanted his towel spread out to dry rather than folding it. For me, that was one more intrusion, of many, on the order I had established for myself and thus cause for grievances. While he conceded to my requirements in many areas of my life, he simply would not concede on this one. Today, I looked at his spread out towel and I had to smile at what I had made important. Letting go of what we hold against others, even in what seem to be the smallest irritations, is how we learn the only important thing is to know who we are. This involves a lot of letting go of control and making healing and forgiveness a priority. Everything in this world can show us where we put ourselves at the forefront and assert our existence as more important than that of anyone else. When we make demands, we victimize others, and when they don't meet them, we see ourselves as victimized. That is the game of the ego. As long as we stay in this game, the ego is in business because the game of guilt is kept intact.

What is important in these Lessons is the emphasis Jesus puts on our ability to choose. "**Now I would choose again, that I may see.**" (W.52.4.6) The reason he says making a new choice is so important is because "**What I have chosen to see has cost me vision.**" (W.52.4.5) In other words, "**I see nothing as it is now.**" (W.52.4.1) To see with vision is to see we are all the same. We have the same ego and the same holiness. While each of us seems to have a different story with different characters in our dream, the themes of abandonment, unworthiness, victimhood, and guilt are all the same for us all. When we see that the characters have all been cast by us, that we are the directors of the play, we learn we truly are not the victims but, in fact, we wrote the script for those in our play. In other words, we are the dreamers of this dream and not the dream figures. It is our dream and all the characters are there by our own bidding. "**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 not an easy thought for us to accept because we prefer to see ourselves as victimized by events of this world precisely so we would not have to take responsibility for our condition or for the separation.

While Jesus tells us that we have no private thoughts, it seems we are only aware of private thoughts because those are what we listen to. We think our thoughts mean something, but Jesus tells us they mean nothing, and "**They do not exist.**" (W.52.5.5) When I look at my example of how towels should be hung, these thoughts exist because I am thinking them. But what all these thoughts do is ". . . **obscure all that is really mine,**" (W.52.5.7) which is the totality of my Being as a Son of God, One with every brother. Private thoughts assume separation and uniqueness rather than Oneness. Thus, exposing my private thoughts and recognizing their purpose, which is to keep separation real in my mind, is what healing is about. It is taking the false to the truth so we can know we are blessed. Our lives have been built on many false assumptions that include the reality of the body, world, linear time and the separation. Time did not come into existence until "**the first projection of error outward**" (T.18.I.6) which gave rise to the material universe.

Jesus is showing us through these Lessons that we need to be sure of our goal in every situation. He says, "**In any situation in which you are uncertain, the first thing to consider, very simply, is 'What do I want to come of this? What is it for?'** The clarification of the goal belongs at the beginning, for it is this which will determine the outcome. In the ego's procedure this is reversed. The situation becomes the determiner of the outcome, which can be anything." (T.17.VI.2.1-5) (ACIM OE T.17.VII.58) We are asking for help to release the beliefs we hold, as well as the guilt associated with them, so our false thoughts can be replaced with His peace.

Jesus offers us a prayer that we can turn to whenever we are out of peace.

***"I must have decided wrongly, because I am not at peace.  
I made the decision myself, but I can also decide otherwise.  
I want to decide otherwise, because I want to be at peace.  
I do not feel guilty, because the Holy Spirit will undo all the consequences of my wrong decision if I will let Him.  
I choose to let Him, by allowing Him to decide for God for me."***  
(T.5.VII.6.7-11) (ACIM OE T.5.IX.96)

Our part is to bring awareness to the beliefs driving our experience and willingly bring them to the Holy Spirit. We are not asked to practice qualities that we consider spiritual, such as detachment from what we still value or virtuous behaviors. Our only task is to bring awareness to our minds by watching our thoughts and noticing when we are not at peace. That is the purpose of time. Using time in any other way keeps God at arm's length and thus continues to maintain the separation.

By going after ego pursuits, I recognize that I put God off into the future and refuse to acknowledge and experience His Presence here right now. Any drama going on in my life right now does not change the fact that God's grace surrounds me, His Answer is available right now, and is always some form of peace. The peace becomes available when the blocks I am holding are released to the Holy Spirit.

Picture an inner altar where holiness resides and put your troubling thoughts there for the Holy Spirit to shine them away. Our part is to question the values and cherished beliefs we hold that keep the truth at bay and be willing to bring them to His healing light. He will do the rest. We can't transform ourselves. Leave this to the Holy Spirit Who does the healing. Our part is not to interfere meaning it is not up to us to heal ourselves. The ego will never consent to its undoing.

Love and blessings, Sarah  
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