

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 94 I am as God created me.

Sarah's Commentary:

This is a very significant idea and thus it is repeated many times. **"I am as God created me."** (W.94) What that really means is that the image or persona I have made of myself and the way I have defined myself, both good and bad, cannot be the truth. It seems to me that the behaviors I exhibit define me. It seems to me when I get angry, say nasty things, gossip, and do things I know are not well intentioned, I build a personal record that is less than honorable. As I look at this record, I judge myself as guilty and sinful, which is not the truth. The truth is that I have not changed myself from how I have been created by God, but I have made judgments, about myself, real in my mind. Now I think this self is what I am and judge myself as guilty and deserving of punishment. The fact is that I have simply made a mistake. I am mistaken in who I think I am. In the decision for the ego thought system, I have chosen to believe I have separated myself from love. While I judge myself for what I think I have done, I nevertheless value my individual special self.

There are behaviors I see as good, loving, and even spiritual about myself as well, but when I look more deeply, they too are based on false perceptions of who I am as special and unique. Who I am in truth is still untouched by all the thoughts I hold about myself, which are connected to the body and personality. **"Littleness is the offering you give yourself. You offer this in place of magnitude, and you accept it."** (T.15.III.1.3-4) (ACIM OE T.15.IV.22) In other words, let us not be content with the self we made, but instead, let us allow the Holy Spirit to reinterpret our misperceptions of ourselves and others until we come to know the truth of what we really are.

If we did not accept our littleness and instead connected with the magnificence of our true Self as created by God, we would know our reality. Through striving in this world for those things we believe will bring us joy, satisfaction, and peace, **"you are belittling yourself and blinding yourself to glory."** (T.15.III.1.6) (ACIM OE T.15.IV.22) We always choose one at the expense of the other. We always choose littleness or glory in every circumstance. **"It is essential that you accept the fact, and accept it gladly, that there is no form of littleness that can ever content you. You are free to try as many as you wish, but all you will be doing is to delay your homecoming. For you will be content only in magnitude, which is your home."** (T.15.III.2.4-6) (ACIM OE T.15.IV.23)

Thus, we are tempted to define ourselves based on attributes we see in ourselves. Our identity as a separate, individual self living in a body seems to have a very strong hold on us. **"Temptation has one lesson it would teach, in all its forms, wherever it occurs. It would persuade the holy Son of God he is a body, born in what must die, unable to escape its frailty, and bound by what it orders him to feel."** (T.31.VIII.1.1-2) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.83) Yet if the separation never happened, everything the ego tells us we are must be false. If I truly am as God created me, everything I have made of myself is not true. None of my actions have altered

who I really am. This elicits fear in me because I identify myself with what I have made of myself, and thus it leaves me not knowing who I am.

The moment we were born into these bodies, everybody treated us as a body and a personality, and it is now all we know of ourselves. It would be nice if we were treated as a soul and as an eternal being of light and love because that is what we are. We get into routines in our lives, and the routines are the melodramas that captivate our consciousness, but we can free ourselves from the box of our personality and our physical self with which we identify. This is what the practice is about. We are now much more aware of this limited self, so our focus in our healing is to try to get in touch with the Christ Self. What this requires is that we watch our thoughts and keep bringing them to the inner altar of light. **"Healing occurs as a patient begins to hear the dirge he sings, and questions its validity. Until he hears it, he cannot understand that it is he who sings it to himself."** (P.VI.1.5-6)

This dirge is based on the guilt we hold and constitutes all the stories we tell of how we have been hurt and abused. Jesus says that we hang onto this guilt and hug it close, sheltering it and turning to it for its loving protection. That is quite a statement about our investment in guilt and the thoughts we hold close and even defend. We think there is safety in the defenses we have set up to protect ourselves. Jesus tells us that the ugliness of our thoughts has so deceived us that we have covered them over with sounds that seem beautiful to us. This is how we defend against the love we are. Yet **"Nothing is required of you to reach this goal except to lay all idols and self-images aside; go past the list of attributes, both good and bad, you have ascribed to yourself; and wait in silent expectancy for the truth."** (W.94.4.1)

We have not screwed up the Self that God created. We can't corrupt what He has created. It is arrogant to think we can do anything to change this Self. We are as God created us and remain in His image. Whatever we have done in the world, in this illusion, has no effect on who we really are. We can forgive it all by no longer protecting this image and no longer continuing to defend against the truth. **"You stand in light, strong in the sinlessness in which you were created, and in which you will remain throughout eternity."** (W.94.2.6) When we choose to see sin in others and see ourselves as innocent, we deny our responsibility for making this body and this world, and we deny our responsibility in separating from God.

Connecting with the truth of who we truly are invalidates everything we think we are. The truth is that we are the Son of God, who has never left His home in God. **"This is the Self that never sinned, nor made an image to replace reality."** (W.94.3.6) While we think we are in this world and walking around uncertainly, our true reality, who we really are, has never left our home in God, knows no fear, and can't even conceive of loss, suffering, nor death. Every time we connect with the truth, **"I am as God created me,"** (W.94) we accept the Atonement for ourselves. In other words, we accept the healing or correction for ourselves. The Atonement makes it impossible to be anything except what God created, even though we can stay unaware of this truth.

How can we know any of this is true? We can only know it when we **". . . lay all idols and self-images aside; go past the list of attributes, both good and bad, you have ascribed to yourself; and wait in silent expectancy for the truth."** (W.94.4.1) Without the experience of corrected perception of ourselves, we have no reason to believe what Jesus is telling us. That is why we are urged to enter the place where we can have some experience of the truth. What is required for this to happen? All we need to do is recognize how we worship the idol of the self we think we are and bring these thoughts of specialness to the Holy Spirit, Who will reinterpret them for us. Don't we take great pride in our thoughts, ideas, opinions, independence,

and beliefs about ourselves, whether good or bad? We hold them in place, saying, "That is just the way I am," as if it were an immutable fact.

What we need to understand is that we don't have to strive for our magnitude because we already have it. It is just that we don't know it. Striving is of the ego. We think that we can add something to God's creation through our own efforts, and that we can make ourselves better or more spiritual. Our part is only to bring our attributes, beliefs, and self-concepts to light, nothing else. We can't add anything of value to the truth.

The Lesson today is repeated seventeen more times in the Course and said in many ways throughout the text. Jesus keeps reminding us over and over of this truth about ourselves. Again, it is something we need to **"attempt to feel"** (W.94.3.1) rather than just to verbalize. It is important to realize that there is nothing we need to strive for. Our reality belongs to us, but to know it, we need the Holy Spirit's help. Our part is to look at our illusions of ourselves and the thoughts we hold and bring them to the light of the Atonement. We must do our part. It will not be done for us, but when we bring our perceptions to the truth, the Holy Spirit does the rest. The truth can only be revealed through our willingness as we **". . . wait in silent expectancy for the truth. God has Himself promised that it will be revealed to all who ask for it. You are asking now. You cannot fail because He cannot fail."** (W.94.4.1-4)

Clearly, if we want to know the truth about ourselves, we have to go through the darkness of the ego thought system. We can't just do a spiritual bypass by affirming truth. He makes it clear that we must take responsibility for our thoughts, attachments, all our self-concepts, belief in the body, and all our attributes. They have all been held in place by our decision to separate from the truth and must be laid aside. This is the part we must do if we want to experience the peace of God. It will never be imposed on us.

Today, we meditate on this idea for the first five minutes of every hour. That is quite a commitment! Are we willing to make this commitment? He asks that we make every effort to do so and calls this a giant stride toward our release. How motivated are you to arrange your schedule today to attempt this holy mission? I have to be honest and admit I have never been totally diligent in following these requirements in the years I have studied this Course. Although, I am struck today by the impact of being told that this is another giant stride Lesson, following up on the two previous giant stride Lessons 61 and 66. I am compelled to give it my best today. We are simply asked to do our best; and if we fail at any point, we forgive ourselves and pick it up again as soon as we realize our failure. Forgetting is another opportunity to look at our resistance. It is not intended to induce more guilt in us.

We start the practice today by laying aside all idols and self-images. We review how we think of ourselves in terms of our attributes, both good and bad, our roles, and the images we hold of ourselves and then **"wait in silent expectancy"** (W.94.4.1) for our true Self to be revealed. We wait in confidence and stillness. We watch our thoughts go by and let the truth dawn upon our minds. Throughout the hour, we remind ourselves as frequently as possible, **"I am as God created me."** (W.94)

Also, remember that when someone irritates or upsets you that this is another opportunity for you to look at the upset in your own mind and bring it to the truth. You can choose not to throw your peace away by what others do. Apply the Lesson very specifically if you feel discouraged, angry, or distressed in any way. The upset may be a thought in your mind about someone or it may be someone you have in your life who irritates you. Do not succumb to the temptation to blame or judge, but rather, take responsibility for the thoughts in your mind and ask for help to

release them. Remember, what you are seeing outside yourself is just a split-off part of your own mind, an outside picture of your own inner condition. **"And be sure to respond to anyone who seems to irritate you with these words: *You are as God created you. You are His Son eternally.*"** (W.94.5.5-7) Apply the Lesson throughout the day, whenever you see yourself unfairly treated or victimized, recognizing that this is not the truth. We are one Self. Our interests are the same. I love you dearly as part of that One Self.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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