

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 113 Review III ~ Lesson 95 and Lesson 96

Sarah's Commentary:

There are times I feel I am at the mercy of my raucous ego. This is what is described in Chapter 23 as "**The War Against Yourself**," where Jesus says these are thoughts of our littleness that lead us into temptation, but this need not be. If we allow our littleness or that of any brother to lead us into the temptation to judge and attack, we will ". . . **walk trembling in a fearful world**," (T.23.IN.5.7) (ACIM OE T.23.I.5) and not realize, all this time, that Heaven's glory shines on us though we remain unaware. Part of our mind wants to choose peace and happiness. It is in conflict with the part that still wants to listen to the dictates of the ego, telling us our anger is justified, we have reason to be afraid, we have been wronged, and there is something still of value to pursue in the world. This conflict can become unbearable when we have one foot in the ego camp, listening to the voice of the false self, and the other in Spirit. The answer to this conflict is to step out of the ego and devote our lives more and more to accepting the truth about ourselves. We do this by denying the power of the ego to rule our lives. This is the only appropriate use of denial and very helpful to our healing.

This Lesson affirms that we are One Self, and if this is indeed the case, how can One Self be in conflict? How can there be repressed and denied parts of us that have any reality? How can there be parts that we are ashamed of, dark places we want no one to see or know about? Though we can give these parts power, none of them are real. They only seem to be the truth about us because we have invested belief in these thoughts. We believe we are something other than what God created. How is this possible when there is only one true power, which is love? How is it that the ego seems to have any power at all?

Our minds are powerful because they receive their power from our Source. We have taken some of that power and given it over to the ego. And it is that part we listen to so much of the time. We identify with that part when we identify with the body and personality. The truth is that our reality is beyond the ego identity. It is the decision-making part of the mind that can choose against the ego. This is where our true power is. It is not with the ego, since we can decide against it whenever we choose.

The truth is that we have not turned the beautiful eternal being we are into a sinful self. We have only lost awareness of the Christ Self to a greater or lesser extent. All we have done is closed our eyes to the truth and have chosen instead to listen to the lies of the ego. The truth is that we are perfectly innocent. We can know our innocence when we refuse to listen to the voice of the ego. "**Walk you in glory, with your head held high, and fear no evil.**" (T.23.IN.3.1) (ACIM OE T.23.IN.3) "**What can you value more than this? For here is your salvation and your freedom. And it must be complete if you would recognize it.**" (T.23.IN.6.6-8) (ACIM OE T.23.IN.6) In other words, we need to move to one side of this conflict by recognizing that anything in us other than peace and joy is not the truth.

There are many temptations during the day to justify why we are upset. These situations need not be significant. It may be a comment from someone, a critical look, a bill we weren't expecting, an accident, or anything we don't like where we choose to throw away our peace and insist it was taken from us. Now we feel justified in being angry and upset, telling ourselves that the cause of our anger is coming from this situation. Yet the fact is that the cause of our upset is coming from a thought that we are holding about our self. This thought has been denied or repressed. Now we project it onto another person or situation outside of our own minds. It is impossible to have a reaction to another unless we have denied it in ourselves first. When we take responsibility for our projections, we can undo what we have denied in ourselves.

Today, we recognize our mind as cause and the world as effect. This may be hard to grasp because we have reversed cause and effect. The reality is that everything starts with the beliefs and concepts we hold about ourselves. When someone says something that we find hurtful, it is only because we already hold these self-attacking thoughts in our minds. If this were not the case, what is said would have no effect on us.

Today, we dedicate ourselves to the truth of who we are, so when the temptation arises to be pulled back into our littleness, we remember who we are. If this seems too difficult in the moment, we can take the time to simply rest with the feelings that emerge. We can use affirming self-talk to remind ourselves that we are One Self, united with our Creator. We can allow any feelings to arise without trying to distract from them. We can accept that everything is playing out perfectly for our highest good, and we can trust in the perfection of the orchestration of everything that comes up in this classroom.

Truth walks with us and nothing can hurt us. We are perfectly safe! As Jesus says, **"Would you, for all these meaningless distractions, lay Heaven aside?"** (T.23.IN.4.5) (ACIM OE T.23.IN.4) We lay Heaven aside for the most trivial reasons, don't we? Look at what we sacrifice when we get upset---our peace and our joy! **"Your destiny and purpose are far beyond them, [the meaningless distractions of this world] in the clean place where littleness does not exist."** (T.23.IN.4.6) (ACIM OE T.23.IN.4) The discipline we apply to these Lessons is what brings us back to ourselves.

When we identify with the ego, we see attack and defense as our way out. When we choose our innocence, our One Self, and our purpose for being here, then we see everything as a reflection of our minds and a part of our One Self. When upsets, judgment, unworthiness, and blame arise today, be willing to turn them all over to the Holy Spirit. When we look at our judgments and self-attacks with the Holy Spirit from above the battleground and outside of this dream, we see their unreality. They are just reactions of the character in the dream and not the truth of what we are. We can smile at the silliness of it all. Nothing in this dream is serious. It is all made up.

We are One. And we can choose to release anything standing in the way of that Oneness. We can see it is just a wrong-minded thought of separation we are holding and cherishing. If we have difficulty letting it go, remember that we have Mighty Help to call on. Spirit reminds us that we are not our thoughts. This is all about our choice and our willingness to let go of our way, our beliefs, and our perspective and lean on His direction. We will then see with a broader perspective as we look through the eyes of Jesus who is a symbol of the love within us. We all share the same Self. **"How beautiful it is to walk, clean and redeemed and happy, through a world in bitter need of the redemption that your innocence bestows upon it!"** (T.23.IN.6.5) (ACIM OE T.23.IN.6) There is nothing more important, **"For here is your salvation and your freedom."** (T.23.IN.6.7) (ACIM OE T.23.IN.6)

You may want to read more in Chapter 23 where Jesus goes on to talk about the laws that appear to rule the world we made, which are **"The Laws of Chaos."** (T.23.II) (ACIM OE T.23.III) These laws define separation by saying: 1) We each have our own truth and it is different for everyone. 2) Each one of us must sin and therefore deserves attack. 3) We have made a God in our own image and told Him what He must believe about Himself. We ultimately hate and fear this God we made. He appears to be a more powerful ego. And finally, 4) We have what we have taken from others, so we can gain at their loss. If you reflect on these laws, you will see that they are laws we live by when we choose to live in competition with others rather than accept the truth of our reality as the same One Self.

Jesus gives us a very simple way to assess whether we have chosen the wrong mind of the ego or the right mind of the Self we are. He says that our feelings will inform us. Each time we are not experiencing peace and happiness, we have chosen the ego. Now we can make another choice. **"Forgiveness cannot be withheld a little. Nor is it possible to attack for this and love for that and understand forgiveness."** (T.23.III.4.5-6) (ACIM OE T.23.IV.44)

For those of us who struggle to understand this Course, which can seem difficult, this section reminds us that it is, in fact, easy because it makes no compromise. **"This is the truth, and nothing else is true."** (W.95.10.3) The truth about us is that we are One Self and the knowledge of who we are is still in our minds. All we need to do is bring the blocks we hold against the truth to the light; but this is challenging for us. We can accept that truth is true, but it is much harder to accept that **"nothing else is true."** (W.95.10.3) Jesus says, **"My role is to separate the truth from the false, so truth can break through the barriers the ego has set up and can shine into your mind."** (T.4.III.2.5) (ACIM OE T.4.IV.47) **"Who but the insane would undertake to believe what is not true, and then protect this belief at the cost of truth?"** (T.4.III.10.4) (ACIM OE T.4.IV.55) This is exactly what we do when we defend our perspectives and think we know anything of value. The world is an illusion. Nothing here is real. We have given meaning to everything here. In reality, nothing here has any meaning except the meaning we give it all. Now we are called to withdraw our own meaning and let the truth be written in the space left open in our minds.

Today, we are called to read over the ideas and comments, **"And then begin to think about them, while letting your mind relate them to your needs, your seeming problems and all your concerns."** (W. Review III.IN.5.3) We are basically letting related thoughts come to address any need, problem, or concern that we bring to this practice. Let the thoughts come up without your effort, but simply allow them to emerge. They are providing you guidance for your problems in light of this Lesson. We already have the wisdom in our right minds. With these ideas in your mind, **"Give it faith that it will use them wisely, being helped in its decisions by the One Who gave the thoughts to you."** (W.RIII.IN.6.2) **"Have faith, in these reviews, the means the Holy Spirit uses [forgiveness] will not fail."** (W.RIII.IN.6.4) The means provided us are to release all the thoughts that block our peace by taking responsibility for them. It is never about forgiving anyone but only about bringing the thoughts we project onto others back into our own minds and forgiving ourselves for using others to block our own peace and joy.

Remind yourself to do the Lesson frequently throughout the day on the hour for the first idea and on the half hour for the second idea, giving the idea a brief but serious review. Most important, because we forget all the time, the introduction ends by saying, **"Do not forget how little you have learned. Do not forget how much you can learn now. Do not forget your Father's need of you, as you review these thoughts He gave to you."** (W.RIII.IN.13.1-3) When we listen to our thoughts and allow them to dominate our minds, we lose our way. We forget that we are not our thoughts, and they don't define us. To remain with the obsessive thoughts of

the ego is to choose to remain in hell when Heaven is stretching its arms to us. **"Do not forget your Father's need of you, as you review these thoughts He gave to you."** (W.R.III.IN.13.3)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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