

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 164

Now are we one with Him Who is our Source.

Sarah's Commentary:

Today, our task is to remember what is already given and accept that we can't change ourselves as we were created. This is the nature of the Atonement Principle---a guarantee by God that we are as we have always been and as we were created. We acknowledge this by contemplating the Lesson of the day, entering into the stillness where truth abides. Get in touch with this deep well of peace: **". . . an ancient peace you carry in your heart and have not lost."** (W.164.4.2) It is in us right now. This peace has never been disturbed by the events and circumstances of our lives. It has not been affected by our decision to turn away from the truth and choose the ego as our identity. It looks out constantly from deep within us without any judgment and has been with us consistently throughout our lifetime.

The place where truth abides does not need to be earned or even sought. It has always been there. We get in touch with it by releasing the thoughts in our minds that keep this place blocked by our focus on the sights and sounds of this world. We are using time now for the purpose of healing our minds, rather than wasting time in pursuit of the trifles of this world. It is not that our pursuits in the world are wrong, by any means, nor something we should feel guilty about if they still attract us. We are not asked to sacrifice what still holds value for us. Increasingly, as we see that the things of this world do not bring us happiness nor the deep peace we crave, these worldly pursuits will drop away naturally.

We increasingly recognize that peace and happiness do not come from what we pursue in the world, but from within ourselves. The important thing is not what we are doing in the world, but where the mind is with which we do it. Thus, the world becomes a classroom for the undoing of the ego thought system of sin, guilt, and fear. This is a process. Jesus assures us that we will not be hurled into Heaven with our decision to awaken from this dream, but we will only go as quickly as our fear will allow. Our journey is a process of undoing the fearful thoughts that dominate our minds and keep us attached to this illusion.

Jesus introduces the Lesson by asking, **"What time but now can truth be recognized?"** (W.164.1.1) He then repeats the word "now" five more times in this Lesson, as well as speaking about "the present." He is not talking about mindfulness, where we focus on our senses and experience the moment through our senses, which some traditions teach. On the contrary, he is saying that the sights and sounds of this world show us the **"senseless, busy world,"** (W.164.1.5) which is all past. We are being taught to change the way we see the world by looking on it through Christ's eyes. In other words, we are asked to see with vision. And what do the eyes of Christ show us? **"He looks past time, and sees eternity as represented there."** (W.164.1.4)

This is when our seeing is no longer blocked by the importance we give to the forms of this world. It is an experience of the holy instant, talked about in great detail in Chapter 15. This neither involves our eyes nor our ears, nor any of our senses, which were made by the ego to block our

awareness of eternity. Our senses were made to prove to us that the world is real. When we join with the Mind of Christ, the world fades away, and **"Its sounds grow dim."** (W.164.2.2) There is an increasing recognition that this world is not our home. The purpose of the world is now only for forgiveness. Everything in the world, our relationships, and the circumstances of our lives can now serve this purpose.

We are now being guided in all things by the Holy Spirit, whose loving perspective helps us to know intuitively what to say and what to do. **"How easily are all your seeming sins forgot, and all your sorrows unremembered."** (W.164.3.3) The past is over, and we no longer have any memory of our sorrows, nor our grief. This happens when we invite a new interpretation to show us who our brothers are in truth. It is not that we won't have any judgments, but that we are willing to bring all our judgments and grievances to Him for His interpretation. Now our grievances of the past are released and unremembered. It does not mean that we have no memory of events in our lives, but we no longer remember the pain of those events. With each miracle, our perception shifts, and we return to the world with renewed vision. At the end of this process in which we are engaged, we come to the final holy instant when we remember what we are. When we do, we no longer identify ourselves as the character in the dream. This is when we come to understand our **"seeming sins"** (W.164.3.3) are simply a result of our choice for the ego. A new choice is always presented to us in each situation that we encounter in the world. With each circumstance in our lives, we have a choice for Heaven or for hell. Which will we choose?

In the Song of Prayer, we are told that the song is the gift. **"You have sought first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all else has indeed been given you."** (Song of Prayer.1.I.3.6) How much do we want this? How much devotion do we give to this goal? We won't be sure it is the only thing we want until we experience the ecstasy of it, which will end our doubt that the things of this world can ever satisfy this longing for God. It is a longing for **". . . an ancient peace you carry in your heart and have not lost."** (W.164.4.2) It is the longing to know our holiness and our perfect innocence. Any pain that we experience in our lives is an indication that we have chosen the wrong mind, but it is just another opportunity to choose again.

Jesus is clear in letting us know that our desire for God is always burning in us and is a powerful magnetic pull that actually takes a great deal of our energy to resist. Sometimes, we may feel we don't have sufficient devotion, or we compare ourselves with others, who seem to have a stronger desire for truth. This may bring up guilt in us and a judgment that we place on ourselves that we are not sufficiently committed to the goal of awakening from this dream. Yet, in spite of our own self-assessment, Jesus tells us that the truth is, the desire for God is so strong in all of us and the pull so overpowering that we fear its attraction. Our fear is similar to the fear of being possessed, where our individuality and uniqueness that we value will be dissolved. We fear making a total commitment to awakening, and so we protect and defend what we have made. Are you able to get in touch with this fear?

Jesus says **". . . you would save yourself from His Love because you think it would crush you into nothingness."** (T.13.III.4.1) (ACIM OE T.12.III.14) The ego represses our impulses for God with substitutes like food, sex, special relationships, money, power, and fame, all of which we seek, thinking it is what we really want. Yet the real desire is not for these things, but for God. These are all distortions and poor substitutes of what we truly want. Every time we go for some pleasure in the world, we are actually seeking for the happiness and peace of God.

In the Song of Prayer, Jesus says, **"Prayer is a stepping aside; a letting go, a quiet time of listening and loving."** (S.1.I.5.1) It is what this Lesson is getting at. It is about being in a state of prayerful gratitude and love, listening to His Voice, and maintaining our determination to experience this place in us that sin has never touched. **"Faithfulness in practicing today will bring rewards so great and so completely different from all things you sought before, that you will know that here your treasure is, and here your rest."** (W.164.4.5)

Only then will we know where our treasure is. Now our priorities are set right. We can clearly distinguish the valuable from the valueless and recognize what is worthy. **"And what is worthy of your love receives your love, while nothing to be feared remains."** (W.164.6.5) The things we thought we loved in the world, put a value on, and deemed to be our **"treasures,"** (W.164.8.2) now lose their significance in our lives. Our goal becomes singular---seeking only that which is eternal.

Now our goal is about faithfulness in practicing. How are you doing with this, so far? It is so easy to let the events of our lives distract us from focusing on the Lessons and applying them throughout the day. When we recognize that we do these Lessons on behalf of our own peace and happiness, our motivation increases. We can truly be thankful that we have been shown another way, which is the only road out of the cycle of guilt and fear. We can be grateful that we have been wrong about everything and that we have a Teacher within, showing us the way out of our misery and suffering.

"Our practicing today becomes our gift of thankfulness for our release from blindness and from misery." (W.164.7.3) Jesus urges us, **"Practice in earnest, and the gift is yours."** (W.164.9.5) **"How holy is your practicing today, as Christ give you His sight and hears for you, and answers in your name the Call He hears!"** (W.164.3.1) He brings us immeasurable gifts. They are being held until our consent and acceptance is given to receive them. (W.164.9.1) We will receive them when we are ready. They will not be imposed on us. They will be there when we are ready to acknowledge them. Our readiness comes when we understand that our way has only brought pain and suffering. We become motivated to do this practice when we see how our suffering can turn to joy with His help.

The world has a way of impinging on our determination with the demands of the day, the requirements of our lives, and all the things that seem to need our attention, which can draw us away from this time with God. This is not to induce more guilt, but only to help us to recognize our level of investment in the world and thus our resistance. We can practice the Lesson in every moment throughout the day when there is any temptation to see the "gifts" offered by this world as more valuable to us than the peace and happiness promised us with our choice for God.

Only with our investment in the application of these teachings will the gifts of God be ours, which is a promise God has made to us. (W.164.9.7) Through the application of these Lessons and doing the practices laid out for us daily, we will gradually come to have faith in His promises. In Lesson 327, we are told, **"I am not asked to take salvation on the basis of an unsupported faith. For God has promised He will hear my call, and answer me Himself. Let me but learn from my experience that this is true, and faith in Him must surely come to me. This is the faith that will endure, and take me farther and still farther on the road that leads to Him. For thus I will be sure that He has not abandoned me and loves me still, awaiting but my call to give me all the help I need to come to Him. Father, I thank You that Your promises will never fail in my experience, if I but test them out."** (W.327.1.1-5,2.1)

Admitting that we are wrong and being willing to ask to see everything differently is key to this Lesson. More and more, as we maintain the willingness to be taught, we will give up our way and ask to be shown how to see every situation through His eyes. The Answer is in our right minds, waiting for our acceptance. Jesus pleads with us not to let this day go by without receiving the gifts held out to us. Our consent and our acceptance are required. What he needs from us is our willingness to give up the valueless, which are our personal goals, our fantasies, our pleasures, our specialness, our expectations, our self-concepts, and all things of the ego that don't serve us. Of course, we think that they do serve us, and so we don't consistently recognize their lack of value. Jesus is showing us that they ultimately bring us nothing but suffering. He assures us that the world's goals can never satisfy us. (W.164.8.5) All we need to do is recognize this and let him help

us learn where our happiness really lies. **"Would God deceive you?"** (W.164.9.6) **"How quiet is the time you give to spend with Him, beyond the world."**(W.164.3.2)

With every situation today, we ask to see it through His eyes so He can give us a new interpretation--- everything is love or a call for love. Keep Him in your awareness throughout the day, as much as possible. Let Christ give you His sight instead of relying on your own interpretations; they will always be wrong when seen through the eyes of the ego. Rest in God today, which is possible even in the midst of a busy day. The rest is not in how things go in the world, but where our minds are. The memory of God is in the right mind. Make it a day of blessing and of gratitude by setting your intention for the day as the first thing in the morning. When you get off track, remember that you must have decided wrongly, but you can choose again. Ask for direction in everything you do throughout the day so you can be guided by Him, Who chooses to support your highest and best interests.

"Our practicing today becomes our gift of thankfulness for our release from blindness and from misery." (W.164.7.3) If we truly want to be happy, the only answer is to release the ego, which is about undoing how we see things now. Then the only prayer is the prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit in everything you do today.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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