

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 2

**I have given everything I see in this room
[on this street, from the window, in this place]
all the meaning that it has for me.**

Sarah's Commentary:

We now continue from the previous lesson. Each lesson builds on the one that comes before. We now focus the mind on the fact that nothing has meaning except that which we give it. No thing has meaning in and of itself. Each of us looks at the forms of this world and gives them meaning based on past associations, unique for each of us. None of us sees anything in exactly the same way because our past associations and experiences are different from each other. For this practice, we look at what is around us and declare that what we see is given meaning by our own minds. This means we have the power to change the meaning it has for us. Thus, the meaning that we give to what we see is ever changing.

I have many albums of photographs of my life, activities, and travels that I have taken around the world. At one time, they were all very important to me. Someone asked me what I would take in the event of a fire and the answer at that time was my albums. Then one day, I asked myself: What is it all for? Why are these albums so important? Clearly, there are obvious responses I could make to these questions, but when I went deeper than the obvious, I found that this, and many other things I had given meaning to, had shifted for me. Their importance had fallen away. Now, as I watch events in my life and what seems to be happening around the world, I can use the same process to help me see that I have given everything the meaning it has for me. In applying this lesson, we can see that it is a very empowering idea. If we have given everything the meaning that it has for us, then we can also withdraw that meaning. The power of decision is our own.

Early in our reading of the Text, Jesus asks, "**Do you really believe you can devise a thought system that can separate you from Him [God]?**" (T.5.VII.1.2) (ACIM OE T.5.IX.90) Now we are learning that the process of undoing our thought system that seems to have separated us from God is within us. The Holy Spirit waits for us to decide for God when we are ready. He is there to help us, and the more we accept His help, the more help is available to us. When we are not at peace, we can decide:

"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.VII.96)

When we understand purpose, we understand everything. The only thing we should ask of anything is, "**What is it for?**" (T.17.VI.2) (ACIM OE T.17.VII.58) It is amazing that just by asking this question many things have changed in my life. For example, think of some activity in which

you are engaged such as going to the gym every day or eating only vegetarian. Look at all the expectations you put on it and all the things that are considered important in this process. When we look at it all and ask this question of everything, it is interesting how this starts to open us to questioning all the forms of this world. What is the meaning we have given them? What do we want to come from them? What grievances do we hold if our demands and requirements are not met? What is it that we really want from this situation?

Here, on day two, we continue to question our conditioned minds. Our minds have been held in the bondage of years and years of programming about what we have come to believe is real and important. Now we are going through a step-by-step process of thought reversal. We are learning to watch our minds and bring a gentle discipline to our thoughts. The Course starts on this process slowly and demands very little of us. We are asked not to strain, but to stay relaxed in applying the Lesson today.

This Lesson may appear to be very simple, but simple does not mean meaningless or trivial. We have indicated a willingness to open ourselves to this process of being released from the bondage of the ego and the prison of this world. It is about opening to the possibility that what we assign meaning to is what creates all our stress, disappointments, anguish, pain, and pleasure. Perhaps there is another way of seeing. I honor the decision you have made to commit to a better way.

"The body's eyes see only form. They cannot see beyond what they were made to see. And they were made to look on error and not see past it. Theirs is indeed a strange perception, for they can see only illusions, unable to look beyond the granite block of sin, and stopping at the outside form of nothing." (T.22.III.5.3-6) (ACIM OE T.22.IV.33) There is a world of forms, standing between us and the truth. It is like a veil drawn over our eyes behind which is the true meaning. Many places in the Course talk about how our eyes were made to see without seeing and ears to hear without hearing, and brains to think without thinking. We have been programmed not to see past the forms to the content. This will become clearer as we proceed, yet this is a lesson that helps us in the undoing of our investment in form.

In the practice today, we are told not to discriminate by telling ourselves that one thing is more important than another, or that one thing does not mean anything but another does. Yet we are not to include everything, as that would be a strain. So, in other words, it is not to ritualize these Lessons. He wants us to see that all things are equally meaningless and that we are really looking at content and not the form. We are beginning to look at the fact that there is nothing real in this material world.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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