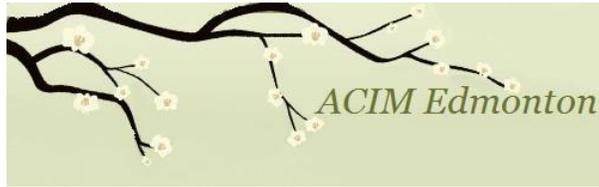


ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 223

God is my life. I have no life but His.

Sarah's Commentary:

We are mistaken when we think that life is the experience we seem to be having in our bodily existence. We cannot live apart from God, yet it appears it is exactly what we believe is happening. I do think I am a separate entity, moving in isolation, unattached, and housed in a body, yet the Lesson says that this is not the case at all. Regardless of how we experience our lives, it is not our existence because **"I do not exist apart from Him."** (W.223 1.2) Today, we let the idea sink in that we have no life apart from God. I function as if I am a body, separate from others, and trying to find my way in the world. I'm trying to be a success, to be happy, to be as good as I know how to be to people around me, and to find my way back to God. Yet I have never left Him! We are still with God, while dreaming of exile in this so-called "life."

This is a beautiful prayer, where we ask our Father that we might see and know the truth about ourselves, rather than focus on our problems and our mistakes. It is our own deep desire of the heart that is reflected in this prayer. **"And we would not forget You longer. We are lonely here, and long for Heaven where we are at home. Today we would return."** (W.223.2.4-6) We are innocent, but we don't know it, and so we long for our innocence. In fact, all our tears, no matter what we think they are about, are only there because we believe that we have lost our innocence, can't regain it, and are beyond redemption. **"And who could weep but for his innocence?"** (Psychotherapy Pamphlet.2.IV.1.7) The truth is that we have not lost our innocence. We only believe that we have because our innocence is not in our awareness while we hold thoughts that obscure it.

Today, we turn to God in all sincerity, recognizing that we are his beloved Son. We have never left our home in Heaven. We are only dreaming of exile. We are the Prodigal Son, afraid to go home, but our Father calls us incessantly to return. Of course, this is a metaphor because our Father knows we are already at home with Him. The Holy Spirit's Voice, the Voice for God, is the Call in the mind for us to wake up and realize that we are with our Father and have never left Him. We have no life apart from Him. This life is a dream that we are dreaming while asleep with our Father. It is illusory. It is a dream from which we are called to awaken, but these are only words until we have an experience where we feel the safety of God's loving embrace. We get closer to that experience every time we ask with sincerity, **"Our Father, let us see the face of Christ instead of our mistakes."** (W.223.2.1) When we see the innocence in our brothers, we come to know our own. We project guilt onto our brothers as a way of buying our innocence at their expense. If we can blame others, we think we can remain innocent of the wrongdoings we ascribe to them, but this is just a way to keep the guilt in our own minds, hidden from our awareness.

We are reminded in Chapter 19, Sections II **"Sin versus Error"** (ACIM OE T.19.III) and III **"The Unreality of Sin"** (ACIM OE T.19.IV) that the world is constant proof that our sin has

overpowered God, we have stolen our identity from Him, and thus defeated Him, corrupted our nature, and now we are guilty. We continue to be invested in our separate identity and the world and thus resist God's Love, believing it will annihilate us. Thus, we have turned the power of our mind against ourselves, believing we have changed reality. **"If sin is real both God and you are not."** (T.19.III.6.1) (ACIM OE T.19.IV.31) **"Sin is perceived as mightier than God, before which God Himself must bow, and offer His creation to its conqueror."** (T.19.III.7.6) (ACIM OE T.19.IV.32) We are assured by Jesus that this is an arrogant thought because we cannot change reality and we cannot change the truth about ourselves. To think that we have is simply madness, not humility. (T.19.III.7) (ACIM OE T.19.IV.32) We can only think we have done it. The only thing that has happened is that we have become unaware of what we are, and through forgiveness, the barriers to the truth are removed.

We need to stay vigilant in our willingness to look at how we defend against God's Love and how we keep Him out of our awareness. We defend against the truth through sickness, control, anger, intellect, victimhood, planning, distraction, addiction, arrogance, and ultimately death. Defenses keep us from receiving the love of God. God is fully present all the time. We are the ones not present to Him. It is up to us to invite Him in. The ego has convinced us that we cannot trust God. We fear His retribution for our assumed sins. We believe that the foundation of our lives would collapse, but Jesus assures us that love can have no opposite. God is only Love. There is no time, no space, no sin, no guilt, no fear, and no death. We are eternal beings who have never left our home. We are just having a dream of living in exile from Him, yet Jesus assures us that God goes with us wherever we go and speaks to us all through the day.

Forgiveness undoes the false, so what remains is true. Forgiveness requires that we look at our false perceptions, our grievances, and our specialness and see them all as nothing. In the process, we may feel disoriented, as the ego is being deconstructed. We need to recognize how much we want to protect our thought system and our certainty that we are right. We are choosing to be right about what we believe, rather than to let it all go and be happy. When we question everything we hold as true, we increasingly see the unreality of our unconscious beliefs. The whole point is to doubt the accuracy of how we perceive ourselves and others. We need to recognize that the guilt we see in others is in our own minds. While we might feel there is someone outside of ourselves whom we need to forgive, the truth is that we only need to forgive the guilt in our own minds that we have projected onto others. In reality, there is no one to forgive. It does not mean others have not made mistakes just as we have, but mistakes call for correction, not punishment.

We are set on preserving our individuality, which is to maintain ourselves as separated beings. Our attraction to guilt is all about our investment in what we have made. We are reluctant to give up our investment in our identity; but with forgiveness, we access the truth in our right minds, and then the love we are can be reflected through us. As it is shared with others, it is reinforced in us.

Today in our prayer, we remind ourselves that we have not sinned and therefore are not guilty. Yet because we believe that we have committed a crime, we are called to recognize that we have been mistaken about ourselves. Our mistaken perceptions can all be undone with a willingness to look at our projections, take responsibility for them, and bring them to the Holy Spirit so they can be undone.

We have so many thoughts running through our minds that are based on fear. They may be related to money, relationships, lack, expectations, demands, requirements, and uncertainties. We give value to what has no value and that is where our suffering comes from. Thus, today I choose to

withdraw my beliefs from thoughts that have no power. The only power they have is the power I have given them. Today, let us be vigilant in mind-watching and release the thoughts that do not serve our peace and happiness. Peace and joy are our natural inheritance. The desire to awaken motivates us to let all interfering thoughts be seen as the nothingness they are. **"What God did not give you has no power over you, and the attraction of love for love remains irresistible."** (T.12.VIII.7.10) (ACIM OE T.11.IX.83)

To illustrate this point, I recently met with a friend who was very distressed about her boss who she perceived as harassing and bullying her. She identified her feelings of sadness, anger, shame, tightness in her body and oppression. She blamed the boss for how she was feeling and believed if she could get away from him or if he would change, she could be happy. Her fear was that this would continue in some form wherever she went. The belief she held about herself was that she was a mistake and should never have been born. She felt that her life was a waste and that she had nothing helpful or useful to contribute to the world. However, she was ready to consider the possibility that the way she saw the situation was not as it really was. She was willing to question the beliefs she was holding about herself. She was willing to accept that the cause of her upset was not about what the boss was doing but about the beliefs she was holding and projecting onto him. In her decision for peace, she willingly gave her beliefs over to the Holy Spirit.

Our days are perfectly orchestrated for our highest good when we choose to use everything that happens in our day for healing purposes. Everything that shows up is perfect for the undoing of our wrong-minded perceptions. Now, everything in the day becomes a joyous opportunity for undoing our wrong-minded perceptions and following the Holy Spirit. Today, we see the face of Christ in every brother, instead of our mistakes projected onto them, **"For we who are Your holy Son are sinless."** (W.223.2.2)

Love and blessings, Sarah
huemmert@shaw.ca

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