

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 270

I will not use the body's eyes today.

Sarah's Commentary:

What Jesus is talking about here is a different way of seeing. It is seeing through the eyes of Christ. It is an internal experience of the mind. Everything we see with our body's eyes brings back information about the world, where we see what is not there and is not real. It is a world of form and images which is given meaning by our minds.

What our eyes show us is the ego's interpretation of the world we see. Thus, we see differences. We see those we like and those we dislike. We see victims and victimizers. We see those we judge as good and those we judge as evil, and we see those who are sick and suffer. We misperceive everything when we look through the body's eyes. When we realize that we are only seeing error, we can ask for help to see through His eyes. We can ask for His interpretation, recognizing that our own will always be wrong.

When we see with Christ's vision, everything is translated into a forgiven world that is both glorious and gracious and not the way we see when we see with the body's eyes. With the body's eyes we see differences, we make comparisons, and we see that which we judge beautiful and that which we judge ugly. We decide what we like and what we don't like. We look for what will promote our specialness at the expense of others.

In the Section in Chapter 31, "**Recognizing the Spirit**," Jesus says, "**You see the flesh or recognize the spirit. There is no compromise between the two.**" (T.31.VI.1-2) (ACIM OE T.VI.31.62) Our whole world depends on this choice. There is no escape from this illusion when we are invested in maintaining the ego thought system as true. It is not that we won't see the body anymore when the mind is healed, but our judgments are now replaced by Christ's vision. In other words, we see the forgiven world---a world of innocence and holiness not seen by the body's eyes. What the body's eyes see, and the wrong mind interprets, is a world of attack, defense, competition, and differences.

How can we see the forgiven world? How do we get this kind of seeing through Christ's vision given to us as a gift from our Father? We commit to watching our thoughts and bringing them to the Holy Spirit so that our wrong-minded perceptions can be undone. Everywhere we look with the body's eyes, we see our own thoughts reflected back at us. Jesus asks us to survey our inner world, letting whatever thoughts cross the mind to come into awareness, and watch these thoughts without attaching to them or judging ourselves for them. Throughout the day, whenever anything upsets us, we are asked to take responsibility for our upsets, to look at them honestly, and to be willing to have them released by turning them over to the Holy Spirit/Jesus (whichever symbol of love in the mind we turn to for help). When we willingly give these thoughts over to the Holy Spirit, our minds will be washed of the perceptions we hold, and now space is made for the truth where interferences have been removed.

"Are you invulnerable? Then the world is harmless in your sight. Do you forgive? Then is the world forgiving, for you have forgiven it its trespasses, and so it looks on you with eyes that see as yours. Are you a body? So is all the world perceived as treacherous, and out to kill. Are you a spirit, deathless, and without the promise of corruption and the stain of sin upon you? So the world is seen as stable, fully worthy of your trust; a happy place to rest in for a while, where nothing need be feared, but only loved. Who is unwelcome to the kind in heart? And what could hurt the truly innocent?" (T.31.VI.6.1-10) (ACIM OE T.31.VI.66, 67)

Mostly, we believe that there are no options to our state of mind. We accept the way we see things and the way we feel. This is a state of victimhood where we feel at the mercy of the world, with no choice on our part. We succumb to our wrong-minded thinking about the situation as if our reactions were all natural and normal. We may react with anger, frustration, disappointment, embarrassment, sadness, or any number of emotions that we consider to be normal responses to a disappointing world. We justify our reactions with explanations as to why they are perfectly reasonable! We are not willing to take responsibility, but we blame people and circumstances for our condition. Why would we want to do that? We want someone to be responsible for the condition of the world, who will take the blame for disrupting Heaven; so when God catches up with us, we can point the finger at the guilty ones.

Our state of consciousness is actually just an execution of an option. It is a choice. As David Hawkins says in *The Eye of the I*, we are not ruled by the mind. What the mind reveals is an endless stream of options all disguised as memories, fantasies, fears, and concepts. See it all as a cafeteria of selections, wending their way across the screen of the mind. Thus, we are not forced to feel resentment by a negative memory, and we don't have to buy into a fearful thought about the future. These are just options. The secret attraction of the option is the inner payoff or secret satisfaction. That payoff is a perceived innocence where others are to blame and not us. We just need to refuse these payoffs. Behind this screen of thoughts is the free space of joy, available to us above all the other tempting options.

It is important to recognize how much we love the payoffs. We hang onto the negativity because we want the payoff. We feel justified in our resentments, self-pity, anger, martyrdom, and jealousy. Yet there is another choice when we are willing to give up the payoff. We want to be right about ourselves and make others responsible for our condition. Above all, we make God wrong by proving that we are fallible human beings and not eternal souls who can't die. Yet it is when we recognize that the only payoff in suffering is that we become more willing to give up being right. Perception (as a result of our eyes and senses) tells us that the world is large, powerful, and permanent, while our self is small, weak, and transitory. In fact, the opposite is true. Who we are is all-powerful and the world is nothing.

In Chapter 25, Section II, **"The Savior from the Dark,"** (T.25.II) (ACIM OE CH 25.III) Jesus asks us, **"Is it not evident that what the body's eyes perceive fills you with fear? Perhaps you think you find a hope of satisfaction there. Perhaps you fancy to attain some peace and satisfaction in the world as you perceive it. Yet it must be evident the outcome does not change. Despite your hopes and fancies, always does despair result. And there is no exception, nor will there ever be. The only value that the past can hold is that you learn it gave you no rewards that you would want to keep. For only thus will you be willing to relinquish it, and have it gone forever."** (T.25.II.1.1-8.) (ACIM OE T.25.III.12) Without the motivation to heal our thoughts and come to peace, we will

continue to cling to the hope that there is something in the world that will bring us some measure of satisfaction.

Vision comes with a willingness to forgive, instead of hate or condemn, and the desire to understand, rather than to judge. Peace is preferred over stimulation and excitement. Humility is valued as we realize that we have been wrong about everything we perceive. It is the realization that nothing in the world brings a deep level of satisfaction—not our special relationships, money, power, nor fame. Neither can there be seeking nor striving by the personal self for enlightenment. There is nothing to strive for or to seek, as we already are what we are looking for.

"To forgive is to overlook." (T.9.IV.1.2) (ACIM OE T.9.III.9) Jesus tells us, **"Look, then, beyond error and do not let your perception rest upon it, for you will believe what your perception holds."** (T.9.IV.1.3) (ACIM OE T.9.III.9) And we certainly do. We say things like "seeing is believing," but the only way we can know ourselves as the Christ is to see our brothers as sinless and to do so is to overlook all error. Yet Jesus tells us that we don't know how to overlook mistakes or we would not make them. We can't correct ourselves. What we are asked to do instead is to bring awareness to our errors and turn them over to the Holy Spirit, Who will shine them away. The ego will never undo itself. We must become motivated to let our errors be brought to truth. This requires willingness and humility; for only when we are willing to surrender our way will we turn to Him.

Our willingness is demonstrated in our determination and discipline to apply the Lesson. Recognize that what you see with your eyes and the meaning you give to your seeing blocks Christ's vision. Be willing to be shown another way. We can't do it on our own, for "on our own" means we are aligning with the ego and putting the ego in charge. It will be done through us as we surrender our way. I affirm today, Christ's vision is how I choose to see this person, this event, or this situation. I am willing to release what my eyes show me as true. I am willing to hand over my own interpretation of what I see and ask for help to have this situation reinterpreted by One Who does know. I am willing to ask for help that I might see with the eyes of Christ.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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