

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 307 Conflicting wishes cannot be my will.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson starts off by saying, "**Father, Your Will is mine, and only that.**" (W.307.1.1) Well, if the truth is that "**There is no other will for me to have,**" (W.307.1.2) how is it we seem to express another will when we choose what we want? Clearly, we have made another will, which Jesus says is precisely what is causing us pain. Indeed, our will never has and never will bring us the peace and happiness we strive for because it is the will of the separate self that came with the decision to separate from love. In that tiny tick of time, fear entered the mind. The Holy Spirit immediately solved the separation, yet we still are holding onto the fear.

The separation was based on a thought system of "one or the other," "kill or be killed." It was me or God. God had to be killed in order for me to exist. This thought system of "one or the other" was taken into the world and it is now a world of competition. It is a decision not to know the holy Self that was created by God. Thus, the will of the separate self brings nothing but pain. How could a will that causes us pain be something that we want to hold onto when our true will is where happiness resides? The thing is, we have no idea that when we pursue what we think will make us happy, it brings pain because it leaves us in a state of separation and thus aloneness. If we believed that this were the case, would we not want to accept our Father's Will where true happiness resides? Would we still want to pursue our own will that only brings suffering?

There is a battle going on because we now hold two thought systems in our mind, which are mutually exclusive. We responded to the Call to know the Self, which is what brought us to this Course. It was a decision to give up the investment in our own will. But there is still a part of the mind that resists this decision. It is the part of the mind that identifies with the ego. While we give the ego power, in reality, it is a "puff of nothingness." It has no power except that which we give it. What seems to be going on now in our mind is an inner battle between our will and that of God's, even though the battle only comes from the ego. **"So does it do constant battle with the Holy Spirit about what your happiness is. It is not a two-way battle. The ego attacks and the Holy Spirit does not respond. He knows what your function is. He knows that it is your happiness."** (W.66.2.2-6)

It seems there is a battle going on in our mind because we want the peace of God, but we also still want to exert our independent control over our lives. We still doubt that we can rely solely on God. We want to make our own decisions because we think we know what will bring us happiness. We still desire to hold onto our personal agenda. We want our demands to be met as we define them. It is the reactive mind that has been conditioned by past learning and we fear letting it go because we believe that it keeps us safe.

Turning our will over to God means trusting in His guidance and depending on Him for all our needs. It reminds me of the Bible verse that says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all else will be added unto you." In other words, we can trust that all will be given as needed when our only goal is God. We place our trust for all our needs on God, not on our own efforts. It is all done through us as we give over our way to Him. While fear and resistance still show up, we eventually recognize that our own will has no real power. Yet we are afraid to fully trust the promises made by God. Our part is to notice the fear as it arises and allow it to be transmuted by the Holy Spirit as we turn more and more to Him for guidance. As we go through the process of undoing our way and turning more and more to guidance, resistance increasingly falls away.

A few years ago, when my husband had left me, and I was in a lot of despair, I felt clear guidance to move from my home and community and start anew. The idea of a move brought up a lot of fear, but I decided to act on the guidance and almost immediately the perfect home showed up. It appeared to be such a gift and so perfect that I did not look any further and made an immediate decision to buy it. I trusted that it was given by the Holy Spirit. My husband and I held joint title on the current home which was a potential obstacle to this purchase. I did not have the money to cover the funds needed to make an offer. In spite of these potential obstacles, I was guided to write a check and put in an offer with no conditions. Having done so, the next day tremendous fear came up and I questioned the guidance. Also, my son's refusal to move, as it was his last year in the high school he attended, it created a lot of trepidation for me.

My realtor heard of my fears and offered to tear up the check and forget the whole thing. I asked him for another twenty-four hours to reflect. I spent the whole night in prayer as fear gripped me and doubt thoughts plagued my mind. I experienced feelings of unworthiness, abandonment, and aloneness. It seemed crazy to go ahead when there was no money to cover the check and no assurance that our other house would sell in sufficient time to meet the conditions. In spite of this, there was a deeper call to trust what seemed to be given. I recognized that this home had shown up perfectly, yet my trust was wavering. However, when morning came, there was a quiet confidence and desire to move forward. I saw the perfection of what had been given. Yes, it felt like a big leap of faith and it was. Despite my lingering trepidation, I told my realtor I was going to go ahead and within seven days our house miraculously sold, with the agreement of my husband! My son was allowed to continue in the previous school district and no additional costs were levied, as was normally the case. There was no loss but only gain to everyone.

I am not suggesting that God is some kind of divine butler, delivering what will keep our egos happy. I look at this situation now as an example of how the form that was given (this home) was just a means for the content of His Love to be experienced by me. It was early in my journey with the Course and I needed this "evidence" to support my wavering faith in the Holy Spirit's presence in my life. Jesus gives us these words: ***"The miracles I give are given back in just the form I need to help me with the problems I perceive."*** (W.345.1.4) Currently, the house has been given over to a bigger purpose and serves that purpose beautifully. It is being used for gatherings, spiritual movie nights, workshops and occasionally as a place for those needing a temporary stay. It is perfectly situated for this purpose in a way I could never have conceived. The space is perfect, the location is between two freeways, thus easily accessed, and parking is not a problem, even though it is in a neighborhood of many adjoining homes. It is not something I could have ever foreseen had I relied on my own will. Following His Will enables us to fulfill our special function in God's plan for salvation in ways we could never have conceived of on our own. ***"The ego believes that all functions belong to it, even though it has no idea what they are."*** (T.9.IV.7.2) (ACIM OE T.9.III.15)

With each opportunity to look at our fears, unworthiness, anger, grievances, and whatever the ego throws at us, we can choose to recognize that we don't have to listen to it. It is always wrong about everything. We listen because we want to be in control. Trusting the guidance of the Holy Spirit seems frightening because it is stepping into the unknown. We are no longer in control. The ego insists that we are not safe with God, but we need to check this out for ourselves. My experience is that when I let go of my fears and trepidation, based on fear thoughts, a glorious new opportunity opens up. No, it does not always mean everything initially looks rosy. In fact, a lot of unconscious guilt is brought to the surface as was my experience. But the trust has grown with many experiences that reinforce the promise God gives us that we are safe with Him.

God only wants happiness for us. **"If I would have what only You can give [happiness], I must accept Your Will for me."** (W.307.1.5) Conflict is only possible when we listen to our separate will. When we join our holy will with God's and see it is the same, **"conflict cannot come."** (W.307.2.1) Clearly, when we pursue the things we still think we want, and when we are tempted to listen to our fears and act on our grievances, there will be a conflict with what God offers us. We see this when there is conflict in the mind between what we think we want and the pull to join with God's Will. We see it when we hold thoughts in our mind of guilt, sadness, grievances, and judgments. It is particularly evident when there are parts of our lives we try to control on our own. We may, for example, want to maintain control over our investments, our health, exercise, special relationships and literally every area of our lives where we keep God out. It is how the love we are is kept from our awareness. Jesus reminds us that our natural desires are all aligned with God's Will.

We have learned to live with conflict. We see the conflict when we want to hold onto a grievance and justify it, and yet we also want to join with our brother and have peace. Conflict can only be resolved when we recognize how much we hurt ourselves when we stubbornly hang onto our positions. Willingness to join with God's Will is the bridge to truth. Notice how much reluctance there is in doing this at times. Notice the thoughts that hold you back. Notice the temptation to stay in hell. Notice the conflict in your mind and how you keep yourself from peace when you hold onto your own will and your own way.

Jesus tells us that we do not know what we want, and what we think we want can never bring us peace and happiness. **"Therefore ask not of yourself what you need, for you do not know, and your advice to yourself will hurt you. For what you think you need will merely serve to tighten up your world against the light, and render you unwilling to question the value that this world can really hold for you."** (T.13.VII.11) (ACIM OE T.12.VII.69)

We think we have made ourselves, yet the Course reminds us to say over and over, **"I am not a body, I am free. For I am still as God created me."** (W.PI.RVI.3.3-5) We can't change what we are in our creation. We are not the authors of our lives---God is. We have made a substitute self, an image, an untrue will that has no foundation, yet we put a lot of energy into defending this image. All our needs, our lacks, and our desire to be important, to be admired, to be liked, to have approval, to get attention, to be listened to, to be acknowledged, and to be wanted and loved are about having others see us as special. With God, there is a solid foundation of security and invulnerability in knowing who we are. Our real Will, which is of God, is unlimited love. Everything else is just a substitute. As Lesson 331 says, we have made a plan for our damnation, yet we have a certain way that is given us to experience release. How much do we want it?

Clearly, we will never be happy as long as we are in conflict. The end of this conflict is the acceptance of the unity of our will with God's. In the holy instant, we join in the One Will, and every time we experience resistance and conflict, we recognize that we have chosen wrongly. We now have a beautiful opportunity to look at what we are thinking and believing that is incorrect and be willing to stay with those thoughts and recognize that we don't need to believe them. They are thoughts that are trying to pull us into the chasm, but we don't have to agree to go there. Help is always available to dissolve the thoughts that do not serve us and shift our perception to the truth of who we are. **"And with this prayer we enter silently into a state where conflict cannot come, because we join our holy will with God's, in recognition that they are the same."** (W.307.2.1)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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