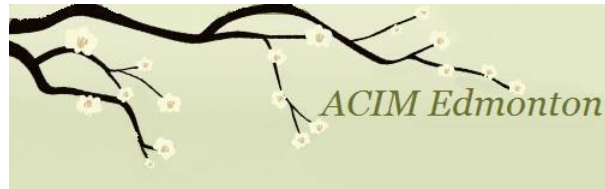


## ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



### LESSON 318

#### **In me salvation's means and end are one.**

#### **Sarah's Commentary:**

Whenever means and end are discussed in the Course, it can seem convoluted and difficult to follow until you get the gist of it. As a result, this Lesson does not seem to be quite as easy to understand and apply as some of the others. Jesus is basically saying, as God's Son, I have only one purpose here, which is to find the innocence God has placed in me. In other words, I accept the Atonement for myself. If I just live by this one dictate, everything else falls into place. I then see everything in this world as another opportunity to forgive my misperceptions.

In Lesson 302, Jesus said, God is **"the End we seek, and He the Means by which we go to Him."** (W.302.2.3) In this Lesson 318, Jesus says that we are the end we seek. **"I was created as the thing I seek,"** (W.318.1.5) as well as the means by which we come to Him. The end we seek is to know ourselves as God's Son and the means to that end is through forgiveness so we can see every brother as the Christ and know this about ourselves as well. Then he says, **"In me, God's holy Son, are reconciled all parts of Heaven's plan to save the world."** (W.318.1.1) That can sound obscure, but as I see it, we come to the place where we finally know that we are God's Son by undoing the belief in sin. All the blocks to the recognition of the truth about ourselves must be given over to the Holy Spirit. In Christianity, it was Jesus as God's Son, who reconciled the sin of man through the love of God. But now he says reconciliation comes through all of us. Jesus says it is up to us to accept the truth about ourselves as God's Son, the same as he did. We have the means to come to know our own innocence.

#### **"What could conflict, when all the parts have but one purpose and one aim?"**

(W.318.1.2) In other words, why would we have a conflict with any brother when we all share the same purpose and the same aim? Every seeming fragment of this One Christ Self (meaning everyone here) has the same purpose no matter what it looks like to us. All of us want to know our innocence---to know who we are as God's Son. Every aspect is part of the whole. We all share one goal. Knowing this can help us to recognize that when we feel superior to any brother, we are misperceiving our reality as One Self.

When we judge and critique other aspects of the Sonship, we are holding judgment against ourselves, and thus, we are not seeing who we really are. When we judge our brothers, have expectations of them, compare ourselves to them, or want to get something from them, we are seeing unhealed aspects of our own minds. We are not seeing the sameness in everyone. When anyone is not accepted into the holy circle of Atonement, we too have left ourselves outside. **"Each one you see you place within the holy circle of Atonement or leave outside, judging him fit for crucifixion or for redemption."** (T.14.V.11.1) (ACIM OE T.14.II.15) As

we watch our minds, we must bring thoughts of judgment and condemnation of any brother to the Holy Spirit. All comparisons are a way to keep us distinct, unique, and separate from the whole. While we think we gain in this and see ourselves as superior, all it does is, it maintains our suffering.

We are still afraid of love, and Jesus is aware of this when he says, "**Be not afraid of love. For it alone can heal all sorrow, wipe away all tears and gently waken from his dream of pain the Son whom God acknowledges as His. Be not afraid of this. Salvation asks you give it welcome. And the world awaits your glad acceptance, which will set it free.**" (W.PII.Q10.What is the Last Judgment.4.2-6)

I had a private healing session with a friend today and we got in touch with the rebel. The archetype of the rebel is the deepest and oldest shadow we have according to Chuck Spezzano. It is the authority conflict with God and the result of all of our problems. We repress, project, and compensate for the rebel. Through compensation, we hide it from view. It is our last, final layer of resistance. The only answer is to accept the innocence that we are. This is to accept the Correction for our misperceptions of ourselves. For me, the rebel showed up with my father. It came to light at a very early age when I literally pounded my fists into him to demand that he not hurt my brother. My father was in my life so I could see this rebellious nature and finally let it go. For me, the letting go involves connecting with the little girl who found her protection and control in the world by not letting anyone run over her. While this has a payoff, it also has a cost. Yet, I am grateful to have this rebel in me exposed. That is the only way healing can happen.

This day is about watching our thoughts in order to see instances in which we want to see ourselves as separate and different and compare ourselves with others. Notice when you are seeing yourself as more or less spiritual than others, when you choose to take sides in a situation that comes up today, or when you hold opinions and expectations of what others should think or do. When our purpose is to heal and to stay in alignment with God in every moment, then every thought or belief that belies that purpose must be forgiven. Yet it must first be seen.

The invitation extended to us in this lesson is to watch our minds and to keep bringing the darkness to the light. Only then will we connect with the magnificence of our Being and bring its light through us to this dark world. In Christianity, only Jesus had that role. He is described as, "The way and the truth and the life." We are now learning to use his example to become the way and the truth and the life. "**Who is the light of the world except God's Son?**" (W.61.1.1) "**I am the goal the world is searching for.**" (W.318.1.6) "**I am the means by which God's Son is saved.**" (W.318.1.4) In our daily lives, each of us is given many opportunities to accept Atonement (healing) for ourselves. Atonement is the undoing of a split that never occurred. "**The Atonement is but the way back to what was never lost.**" (T.12.VIII.8.8) (ACIM OE T.11.IX.84)

Who I think I am as Sarah, a body living in the world, is just a figure in the dream. It is not the truth of me as the Christ Self. It is my mistaken identity; yet I have come to believe it is who I am. In reality, we are one Self, united with our Creator. As I awaken to that reality, I know the truth about my Self. Thus, the end is to realize I am God's Son. The means is to see God's Son in everyone so I can know my own reality. We all share the same goal, the same interests, and the same purpose because we are One Self.

We all seem to be searching to know ourselves, but the search is unnecessary because we already are that which we are searching for. We uncover this truth by releasing our unforgiving thoughts. In doing so, the truth of what we are is revealed. We think we are imperfect, guilty, and fearful and that there is something about us (or others) that needs fixing. That is in itself the problem because there is nothing to fix. Our belief that we need to fix ourselves or others only contributes to the problem. That is why Jesus reminds us that we need do nothing. Trying to do something to fix ourselves perpetuates a belief that there is something wrong with us. We seek for something already in us. There is nothing to change about ourselves. We only need to bring our misperceptions to the truth.

**"But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt. And you are holding both of you away from truth and from salvation. As you forgive him, you restore the truth what was denied by both of you. And you will see forgiveness where you have given it."** (T.17.I.6.5-8) (ACIM OE T.17.II.6)

Not only must we resist the temptation to judge anyone for trying to solve their problems through fantasy, but we must stop seeing ourselves as the innocent victim of forces beyond our control. The belief that we are being victimized by others is the basis for the stories we tell about our lives. If I am a victim, I must suffer, and if I suffer, it must be someone "out there" who is responsible for my pain. Someone must have inflicted it upon me. **"Behold me, brother, at your hand I die."** (T.27.I.4.6) (ACIM OE T.27.II.4) This is the war cry of the ego. You are the cause of my pain. My script is not my own, and I am not responsible for my life, according to the thinking of the victim. "I didn't do it, it's not my fault," is the way we try to buy our innocence in this world in the false hope that God's punishment will thus be delivered to our brothers instead of ourselves.

This comes up all the time in our lives. Some time ago, when my mother was admitted to the hospital, I went there to talk with the staff. I stood at the desk, waiting to talk to someone. I noticed the head nurse and the doctor engaged in conversation, and I stood waiting for at least ten minutes as they chatted with each other and ignored my presence. I noticed some slight irritation come up in me, but I chose to release it and chose instead just to wait quietly without judgment and to choose peace. When the nurse finally stood up and approached me, she was so incredibly lovely in her support and helpfulness. I realized how different the conversation would have been if I felt victimized by this circumstance and expressed my self-importance. Yes, it was a small event of seemingly no great significance, yet I left knowing this Lesson as reinforced in my mind.

It is not our dysfunctional parents, unkind peers, cruel and thoughtless teachers, merciless managers, unappreciative spouses, or uncaring staff who are the reason for our suffering. On the contrary, they are all necessary and beneficial for our curriculum of undoing. **"And to your brother let its message be, 'Behold me, brother, at your hand I live.'" (T.27.I.10.7)** (ACIM OE T.27.II.11) They offer us another opportunity for our salvation by playing a role we have given them to help us awaken. They do so by showing us a reflection of our own unhealed thoughts, and when we release these thoughts, we receive the gift that comes to us through forgiveness.

When we no longer see ourselves as victims but accept responsibility for our own script, we recognize the power in us. Are you ready for this? What is there to fear? Why do we resist? Our only job is to have the courage to find the barriers we have created between ourselves and Love. We say we want to undo the pain, but the ego keeps us seeking and seeking for ways to do this. Will this book, this teacher, or this guru be the answer? The answer is already within us. All we need to do is look at what is coming up in our minds without judging ourselves. Allow these thoughts and beliefs to be exposed. Allow your opinions and conclusions about everything in this world to be undone and recognize that you don't know. To awaken is to give up every value you hold!

**"Teachers of innocence, each in his own way, have joined together, taking their part in the unified curriculum of the Atonement. There is no unity of learning goals apart from this. There is no conflict in this curriculum, which has one aim however it is taught. Each effort made on its behalf is offered for the single purpose of release from guilt, to the eternal glory of God and His creation."** (T.14.V.6.1-4) (ACIM OE T.14.II.10) If you are currently feeling pain, if you are going through some kind of trial, if you are not at peace, or if you are distressed in any way, then you are holding someone responsible. If you agree to see the sinlessness in them, if you join with them, or if you forgive them, then your pain will be completely dissolved. **"The power of God Himself supports this teaching, and guarantees its limitless results."** (T.14.V.6.7) (ACIM OE T.14.II.10)

Jesus assures us, **"From everyone whom you accord release from guilt you will inevitably learn your innocence."** (T.14.V.7.5) (ACIM OE T.14.II.11) The people that attack us are our teachers. When we release them, we have learned to release ourselves. They have agreed to play this difficult role in our lives for that purpose. We can crucify them or learn to forgive and thus be released from the prison in which we hold our brothers and ourselves. It is our choice!

I was having some issues in my relationship with my mother and feeling anger toward her. We went together to a service for Memorial Day and, as I sat through the service, I asked for help to see the innocence in her. There is so much healing for me in this relationship and so many triggers. At the end of the service, a man I had never met, who had been singing in the choir, came and put his arms around me and told me what a wonderful, beautiful, and caring daughter I was. Interestingly enough, I had felt the connection to this "stranger," who delivered a short prayer as part of the service. I felt so grateful for his message and his love that was clearly guided by the Holy Spirit as an answer for my desire for healing.

I find that when irritation arises in me because of something someone says or does, I consciously choose more and more to bring my judgments to the light and choose peace instead. The part of my mind that works against my best interests wants to be right and wants to choose conflict instead of peace. All it takes is the willingness to stop, step back, breathe, and be willing to let go. **"When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. You believe truth cannot deal with them only because you would keep them from truth. Very simply your lack of faith in the power that heals all pain arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy."** (T.17.I.3.1-3) (ACIM OE T.17.II.3) What this does is, it keeps us from awareness of the whole and maintains a warped perspective that can only be corrected when we give everything over for healing.

We want to hold onto our judgments while bringing God into our lives, but it will never work. We can't have freedom while we hold onto that which keeps us in bondage. We can only know truth by releasing our illusions, and that is how we are reconciled. That is the Atonement, which is the reconciliation with God.

***"Let me today, my Father, take the role You offer me in Your request that I accept Atonement for myself."*** (W.318.2.1)

Love and blessings, Sarah  
[huemmert@shaw.ca](mailto:huemmert@shaw.ca)

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