

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 356

**Sickness is but another name for sin.
Healing is but another name for God.
The miracle is thus a call to Him.**

Sarah's Commentary:

It is reassuring to be told that any call we make to God will be answered. ***"It does not matter where he is, what seems to be his problem, nor what he believes he has become."*** (W.356.1.2) It is not a matter of how worthy we feel, or how much guilt we hold in the mind. God's answer is already given. It is available now. We need not clean up our act. How could His answer not be available now when we already have all His gifts? We already have everything we have asked for since all we have ever asked for, no matter how it appears, is peace, joy, and happiness. It is all within us now. We have not changed ourselves no matter how we feel about ourselves. His answer is a miracle that reflects His Love for us. The miracle is a reminder of the truth of what we are. As we go about on our own way, trying to work things out, He has already worked everything out for us. We just need to step back in trust and be led by Love instead of by the voice of the ego.

Sometimes, we have a specific problem, and we call on God for His help, but so often we have already decided on what the solution should be to our specific problem, and we ask God to deliver the solution that we have already determined will fix our problem. What is the real problem? Jesus reminds us that all problems come from the false beliefs we hold in the mind. From these false beliefs, we make decisions that do not serve us. We believe that we understand what we need. I may have a flat tire on the freeway, and I am going to be late for my appointment. I ask for someone to come along and fix it for me. Or I may call out to God, asking why this is happening to me and demand that He do something. Or I think my problem is that I will be late for my appointment, but I don't know the problem. When I think that I do, that is the problem. The only problem is that we block the peace within us with thoughts about what is going on outside of us. To truly ask for help is to ask to accept the situation as it is. It is to ask for help to recognize that we don't know what any of this is for. It is to ask to see the situation as God would have us see it. It is to ask that His Will be done and that we would remember the truth of who we are, so we could attend to the situation in peace. We have no idea what anything is for. We don't know our own best interests.

Our part is to look at how we block His love. That is the only real problem we have. We don't trust His answer because we believe it requires sacrifice on our part. We don't want to sacrifice our thoughts and opinions about what we think the problem is. We think we know, and the one that thinks it knows anything is the false self. We defend this self, believing it is what we are. Thus, we defend against His Love. **"It is not difficult to understand the reasons why you do not ask the Holy Spirit to solve all problems for you. He has not greater difficulty in resolving some than others. Every problem is the same to Him, because each one is solved in just the same respect and through the same approach. The aspects that need solving do not change, whatever form the problem seems to take. A problem**

can appear in many forms, and it will do so while the problem lasts. It serves no purpose to attempt to solve it in a special form. It will recur and then recur again and yet again, until it has been answered for all time and will not rise again in any form. And only then are you released from it." (T.26.II.1.1-8)

His answer is a miracle that shifts our perception from wrong-mindedness to a healed perception and with it comes another step in trust. We trust in the perfection of whatever shows up. When we get out of the way, we recognize more and more that everything is perfectly given. Everything is a classroom for remembering the truth of who we are and for the undoing of our wrong-mindedness.

We only have one problem and that is the belief that we are guilty and have done something terribly wrong. It is the belief in the self we think we are. We think that we are on our own in the world, and that we are doing our best to defend against contingencies that befall us. We don't trust the beneficence of the Loving Presence in our mind that has already solved every problem we think we have. In the movie, *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge was confronted by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future, and in an instant, he saw how his unloving habits created a life of misery for him. In that same instant, he was able to change his mind and choose to replace his unloving habits with compassion and kindness. It is a choice we can all make. We cannot continue to focus on unloving thoughts and be receptive to the goodness of God at the same time. It is one or the other.

When we choose to heal our mind rather than focus on how to fix and control things in the illusion, we come to recognize the perfection of all that appears. We open to His guidance instead of our own limited thinking. We choose to surrender and to trust that all is given when we step out of the way and remember that we don't know our own best interests. Jesus tells us, **"Babies scream in rage if you take away a knife or scissors, although they may well harm themselves if you do not."** (T.4.II.5.2) (ACIM OE T.4.III.28) We are like those babies. We think we know what we want and need to be happy, but Love will not give us what will hurt us. When we ask for what will hurt us, it will not be delivered by Love.

We are called to remember that we are One Self, One with God, and One with all our brothers. Jesus appeals to our need to feel better rather than to continue to experience the pain and suffering we experience. There is no difference in the welcome we give a brother and our acceptance of God's love for us. We may think that we love God and have anger toward a brother, but it is all the same. There is no such thing as me, God, and my brothers, as we are all One. Anger at our brother comes from our belief that we are unworthy of God's love. When we have anger in us, that is what we give to our brother and what we receive for ourselves.

When we bring our unloving thoughts about our self, or others, and all of our worries, fears, and concerns to the healing light of Love, space is made for the miracle to shine forth. We experience our Oneness with all of our brothers when we bring our pain to the Holy Spirit and accept the miracle.

Sickness reflects the guilt in our minds, but the condition of the body is not what is ultimately important. It is in healing the mind where health resides. As long as we carry the belief in the reality of the body, we will experience aging, sickness, and death. As long as we continue to carry a heavy burden of guilt, we will not realize that we are the glorious and grand, enlightened beings that Jesus assures us we are. He reminds us daily that we have not succeeded in substituting the false image of ourselves for who we really are.

Our belief in unworthiness keeps the truth out of our awareness that we are **"complete and healed and whole, shining in the reflection of His Love."** (W.PII.Q14.What Am I?1.1) We don't experience the mind as a clean slate with no past mistakes obscuring the reflection of innocence, which is our natural inheritance and what we truly are. We try to be loving, yet we attack, we get angry, we worry, and we make judgments. Basically, we feel like sinners and thus unworthy of love. All the tears we shed for whatever seeming distress we feel come from the deep sorrow we feel as a result of the belief that we have forever lost our innocence. Yet God assures us, **"My Arms are open to the Son I love, who does not understand that he is healed, and that his prayers have never ceased to sing his joyful thanks in unison with all creation, in the holiness of Love."** (Song of Prayer.3.IV.7.3)

What does he mean when he says sickness is but another name for sin? It does not mean that being sick is a sin, only that sickness is an ego device to keep us believing that who we are is a separated self, living in a vulnerable body, in a world we think is real, and where we experience sickness and ultimately death. Sickness is how we attack ourselves because of the guilt in the mind projected onto the body. **"Sickness is anger taken out upon the body, so that it will suffer pain."** (T.28.VI.5.1) (ACIM OE T.28.VII.58) Sickness reinforces our sense of inadequacy and vulnerability. For healing to happen, the only work we need to do is with our own thoughts. Sickness is not a condition of the body at all, but it is all about the guilt in the mind projected onto the body. When the mind is healed, whether the body is seemingly sick or healthy is not relevant because we are not the body. However, this does not mean that we don't attend to sickness or to our well-being while we still believe in the reality of the body.

The reason that sin and sickness are the same is that this is how the ego mind tries to prove that illusion is truth. While the forms sickness takes are different, the purpose is the same, which is to keep us invested in the separate self. What needs healing is therefore only the thought of separation. The Holy Spirit can use sickness for a holy purpose, just like everything else we have made. It is not helpful to feel guilty over any bodily sickness and worry about how we "manifested" this situation. Healing, when discussed in the Course, is not about healing any particular thing in form, but only about healing the mind.

"Healing is but another name for God." (W.356) When we recognize our reality, we will know that there is no separation and indeed our true identity is One with God. We share the same nature. All healing is just a return to our Source, our Christ Self. Since our Self is One with God, all healing is a return to our reality. That is why this Lesson says Healing and God are synonymous.

Whether we believe in God, talk with the Holy Spirit, or consider Jesus as part of this process, it does not matter, as they are all symbols of the holiness in our right minds. What matters is to bring every unloving thought to this right-minded Symbol in the mind, to make every encounter a healing and holy encounter, to offer forgiveness, to follow guidance, to surrender, and to release grievances. When we do, Love is there. The Source is there.

As the words of this Course remind us, **"A universal theology is impossible, but a universal experience is not only possible but necessary."** (Clarification of Terms.IN.2.5) In other words, this Course is not an intellectual exercise. It is about the application, so we can have an experience of the miracle and with each experience, our trust grows and expands. We recognize and accept more and more how much we are truly loved. We don't need to try to control the events of our lives because our efforts will never be as great as His. **"Who would attempt to fly with the tiny wings of a sparrow when the mighty power of an eagle has been given him?"** (Manual for Teachers.4.I.2.2) To do so is indeed insane.

We have been given this Course as a ladder back to God. The words only point to the truth. The words are not the focus of our learning, so let's not get stuck on the beauty of the words. What they point to is what is important. The metaphysics of this Course are certainly helpful. Yet they are meant not just for intellectual understanding, but to motivate us to forgive. In applying these teachings daily to every situation and event that shows up where our emotions are triggered, we learn the power of what Jesus is telling us. The purpose of these words is to point us to an experience of peace and joy. It is a process. Jesus asks, "**Are you ready yet to help Me save the world?**" (C.2.9.1) When we say yes, we commit to doing the healing. Saving the world means choosing the peace within our own mind. Only by healing the cause (in our own mind) will there be any change in effects (in our own lives).

Let us not lament the world but choose to change our mind about what we see by asking for the Holy Spirit's interpretation of everything we perceive. It means to be willing to be humble, giving over the mind that thinks it knows anything. It is to live in a state of acceptance and inspiration, recognizing the perfection of everything that shows up in our lives.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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