



LESSON 119
Review III ~ Lesson 107 and Lesson 108

Sarah's Commentary:

Today, the Lesson reminds us that we are mistaken if we think we can be hurt in any way. We all believe we can be hurt. Our feelings can get hurt, our bodies can be hurt, and we believe we can die and can lose loved ones. We grieve, we suffer, and yet now we are invited to consider the truth that we cannot be hurt. The error in my mind is that I am a body, and thus, I can be hurt. This is because I have forgotten the truth of who I really am as God's Son. I think I am this body and a vulnerable self, living in the world. The ego has given us our senses to make it all seem very convincing. The body and the world seem very real to us as reported by our senses.

Who is the me that cannot be hurt? It is certainly not the me I identify as 'Sarah', the body, and personality. The Course says the "me" that can't be hurt is who I really am in truth. In other words, the self I think I am, the personality I think defines me, and the image I have made of myself is not my reality at all! When I identify with the body, personality, and image, I feel I am lacking, limited, and vulnerable. But the truth is, I am Spirit, part of the One mind we all are as One Self. Our individual selves are dream figures in the dream of separation we are dreaming. We are now awakening to the truth by undoing the misperceptions in the mind. The conditioned, deceived mind has misled us into thinking that we are these characters in the dream.

But it is not a simple matter of just reminding ourselves we are not the body, and are, indeed, free of all self-imposed limitations. The undoing process requires us to look honestly at the way we defend against the truth. Our defenses attack our reality. We continually work to protect our definition of ourselves because we believe suffering, sin, sickness, and death are real. **"Yet your defense sets up an enemy within; an alien thought at war with you, depriving you of peace, splitting your mind into two camps, which seem wholly irreconcilable."** (W.170.3.2) While we think we are protecting ourselves from external threats, we are actually protecting ourselves from love.

To us, love is treacherous because, at the unconscious level of the mind, we see it associated with sacrifice and loss. This is why we need to turn to the Holy Spirit for His interpretation of our wrong-minded perspective. We made fear, and now we think it is real and inescapable because we are constantly defending against it. When we willingly bring awareness to the fear in the mind and the defenses we built against it, and bring it to the light, we experience the invulnerability of the Self we are. We say we believe God's love for us is true, yet we also believe in pain, loss, sickness, suffering, and death. The message of the Course is totally uncompromising. It can only be one or the other. The state of love and the state of fear are mutually exclusive states of mind. We either choose Heaven or hell in each moment.

As the introduction to the Course says, **"Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God."** (T.IN.2.2-3) (ACIM OE T.IN.4-5) Anything not eternal is not real, and this includes our bodies. This is what the crucifixion was meant to teach us—truth

cannot be destroyed. Although Jesus was crucified as the world saw it, he was awakened, and as such, he knew himself as Spirit. He no longer identified with the body. As such, he could experience no pain, as pain is of the mind. When the body feels pain, it is only because we have projected our belief in guilt onto the body. Through his resurrection, Jesus demonstrated our eternal nature. He demonstrated that he knew who he was and who we all are in truth. We are eternal beings, already home in Heaven, having a dream of exile. We are not the vulnerable beings we think is our identity. We are eternally safe. This journey is about awakening to the acceptance of that truth.

The illusion seems very real and solid to us. How do we withdraw our investment in it? It is a process that we undertake through the daily discipline of watching our thoughts, contemplating the truth, and doing the forgiveness practice as described in the Course. We take responsibility for our projections and recognize that the world is nothing but a reflection of our thoughts. They are thoughts we don't want to acknowledge in ourselves. We would rather see these thoughts in others, and thus, see our guilt in them. Healing requires us to take responsibility for the thoughts in the mind without judging ourselves for them. When we do, our lives and the world become perfect classrooms for undoing our misperceptions. It does take willingness because it goes against everything we have been taught and what we have accepted as the truth.

Pain, suffering, sickness, aging, and death are part of the so-called reality of this worldly experience. While we hold these beliefs, it is not helpful to deny them. To know the truth of who we are as eternal Beings is not an intellectual exercise. We must apply the Lessons to our daily upsets, grievances, and judgments. The teaching comes alive for us only with our willingness to apply these Lessons daily to whatever shows up. As we learn to walk in trust more and more, relying on the Holy Spirit as our Guide and Jesus as our mentor, we increasingly learn that we are perfectly safe and constantly being supported. When we lack trust, we live in fear and worry and try to control things. When we tap into trust, no matter the outcome, we live in a state of acceptance of whatever comes along in our lives, and we know that, ultimately, all things work together for good.

The words of the Course are not intended to make us feel warm and fuzzy while we read them and then set them aside. Nor are they intended to make us into metaphysicians so we can speak with eloquence about the Course. No; none of this will help us. What helps is when we apply the daily Lesson to the activities of the day that tempt us to get upset and take us out of peace. When events show up in our day and we see them as issues, it is because our guilt has invited betrayal, punishment, and attack. Events of the day simply go wrong when our minds give attention to self-attacking thoughts. We don't want to take responsibility for those thoughts as coming from our own minds but rather see others responsible. We want to see others as guilty, and ourselves as victims of a cruel world where we are constantly under attack.

Why would we want this? It is how we defend against the unconscious belief we hold in the mind that God will punish us for our sins. To protect ourselves from this imagined punishment from God, we project our guilt on others and blame them for how we feel. An imagined punishing God is the God the ego has convinced us is waiting for us at the end of our lives. This is the God we are afraid to awaken to. Thus, we continue the game of projecting guilt onto the body and the world, hoping punishment will be delivered to the guilty, and we will be saved. Or we project guilt on our own body and suffer in the misguided belief that God will go easy on us because we have punished ourselves sufficiently to atone for our sins. This is the myth that Jesus exposes so we can see how it has all been set up by the ego. We can see this at play in our own lives when we take the time to notice.

To accept the truth of our sinlessness, we must be willing to see past the errors of others. Regardless of what things look like and how we justify our anger, we share the same Eternal Self.

It requires that we bring all our false perceptions to the Holy Spirit. Thus, vision is restored, as we see beyond what seems apparent to our eyes and see our brothers the same as ourselves. The spark of divinity is in everyone, no matter how dark they may look to us. As we accept the truth of this more and more, we remember who we are and who our brothers are, the same as ourselves.

Jesus tells us, "**The 'reasoning' by which the world is made, on which it rests, by which it is maintained, is simply this: 'You are the cause of what I do. Your presence justifies my wrath, and you exist and think apart from me. While you attack I must be innocent. And what I suffer from is your attack.'**" (T.27.VII.3.1-4) (ACIM OE T.27.VIII.64) This is the thought system we believe and defend ourselves against. It does look as if the world is hurting us. If indeed what we see 'out there' is just a projection of the errors in our own minds, then what we suffer from is our own self-attacking thoughts. He tells us that if our minds are indeed the cause of everything we see, then by inviting Correction of the errors in our minds, we can instead, "**Dream softly of your sinless brother, who unites with you in holy innocence.**" (T.27.VII.15.1) (ACIM OE T.27.VIII.75) This Course is all about healing through our relationships. That is what makes the Course unique.

Instead of seeing the mote in our brother's eye, we remove the beam in our own. In other words, our job is to "mind our own mind." The ego thrives on judgment. We interpret what we see and label the behavior as a "sin." If we convince ourselves that our interpretations are fact, we will act accordingly. Or, as Jesus says, "**To perceive errors in anyone, and to react to them as if they were real, is to make them real to you.**" (T.9.III.6.7) (ACIM OE T.9.II.6) Isn't this the reason for all our distress? We look at everyone through the lens of our own past issues, heartbreaks, and shadow figures. Now forgiveness is impossible because we are convinced of their sins. We can't forgive what we have made real. Jesus reminds us that once we have made error real, forgiveness is impossible. "**The ego's plan is to have you see error clearly first, and then overlook it. Yet how can you overlook what you have made real?**" (T.9.IV.4.4) (ACIM OE T.9.III.12)

What this Lesson is helping us to do is to change our perception so it is possible to overlook error. We are becoming more and more aware that there is another way of seeing anyone who appears to be causing us pain. We need a miracle so we can experience such drastic changes in perception, and indeed this is what the Holy Spirit offers us when we take our misperceptions to Him. We won't experience the shift in perception by ourselves alone. We need the Correction from outside of the matrix. The ego won't undo itself.

We can't pretend that we don't feel hurt, angry, or distressed. Trying to change our perception or trying to figure out the situation by analyzing it, won't work, and feeling guilty for our interpretations will just make us feel worse. The miracle is the Correction in our minds, which shows us that any attack is just a call for love and that it is actually our own call. We do need the Holy Spirit. Turning to Him for His interpretation of every situation brings healing to our minds. Let us today ask the Holy Spirit for His help to undo our misguided perceptions of our brothers. Be willing to surrender and be humble in giving over your way. We must be willing to see that the hatred we see "out there" is in our own minds, and it is just another block to love we are holding to keep the love we are out of our own awareness. Be willing to see this as stubborn resistance to the truth and our need to be right about the way we see things.

We can decide today to stop accepting our own interpretations as true, and instead, asking the Holy Spirit to look on everything for us, recognizing that we just don't know anything. As little children, we are asking to be taught. We need to be willing to surrender our limited understanding and turn to the One who knows.

Love and blessings, Sarah

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