



LESSON 152 The power of decision is my own.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson, like the one yesterday, offers us another opportunity to look more closely at the illusion and what we have made. It clearly tells us that this world of pain, grief, misery, fear, and sickness was not made by God. **"God made it not. Of this you can be sure."** (W.152.6.2-3) If we accept that God created only the changeless and brings us only joy, love, holiness, and peace, then we must accept that we are the ones who made everything that is unlike what He created. God did not make this changing world. Nothing is outside of our own decision. We have that much power! And that is precisely the ego's fear—that we can change our minds anytime we want about the choice we made to support its thought system of sin, guilt and fear.

We all have a difficult time believing we are not at the mercy of the world and forces over which we have no control. It seems to us that the events and situations that show up in our lives happen without our choice, and indeed, that we are victims of the world we see. But in this Lesson, we are told that nothing happens without our consent. At some level of the mind, we have chosen everything that seems to happen, even the time of our death.

This is the movie of our lives. We have no control over the world we made, but we have a choice as to how we respond to it. Observing our lives is like watching a movie. There is no point in trying to influence the characters on the screen and what they will do. It is all part of the prearranged script, but we can work with the mind in how we respond to the script. The Holy Spirit waits for us to offer our thoughts and beliefs to Him so that they can be purified by Him. He does not control, command, demand, or coerce. He must wait until we are ready to give Him our misperceptions for His Correction. As our thoughts shift, the events of the world become irrelevant to our peace of mind, even though they witness for what is in our minds. Think about what this means. It makes mind training very important to our state of peace. Thus, watching our responses to what seems to be happening is essential for healing.

This brings up fear because we enter a realm of the unknown. Even if our lives are a nightmare, there is a familiarity with the known. Giving up control to the Holy Spirit and admitting we don't know and that we are wrong about everything we think brings up fear. Yet Jesus assures us that we are in control of the process. We choose when we are ready to give over our thoughts to be purified. Jesus recognizes that we see the ideas presented here as extreme, but he asks us to think about it. If we were created with everything, in a state of peace, joy, love, and perfect holiness, then who made loss, pain, fear, and sickness? Clearly, these states are opposite to the conditions of peace, joy, love, and holiness, which are our inheritance. Can truth have opposites? To accept opposites or exceptions to what we have been given is to contradict truth. If God did not give us loss, pain, fear, and sickness, who did? According to Jesus, it is our own contribution and our own choice. **"No one can suffer loss unless it be his own decision. No one suffers pain**

except his choice elects this state for him. No one can grieve nor fear nor think him sick unless these are the outcomes that he wants." (W.152.1.1-3)

No wonder Jesus says that this is an extreme idea because we do experience these painful conditions as if they were the truth. We may accept that God is Love and only His truth is true, yet we still accept these painful conditions as also the truth, yet they are irreconcilable states. **"To think that God made chaos, contradicts His Will, invented opposites to truth, and suffers death to triumph over life; all this is arrogance."** (W.152.7.1) For God to bring about these conditions, He would have to be an unloving God. **"For if what is not true is true as well as what is true, then part of truth is false. And truth has lost its meaning."** (W.152.3.8) Now the false is included as part of the truth. It is futile to try to bring the truth to the illusion and to think that we could bring some light into the darkness—it is impossible. We must bring the darkness to the light. Healing is about bringing our thoughts and beliefs to the light of the Holy Spirit. It is to give up control over our own thoughts and is thus a positive use of control as we decide what we will choose.

Jesus says that every time we experience shifting moods, changes in our feeling state, alterations in the conditions of the body, shifting concepts we hold, and all our changing perceptions, we do not experience the truth. **"As God created you, you must remain unchangeable, with transitory states by definition false."** (W.152.5.1) These transitory states can't be true if God created the unchangeable. We are the ones who choose to suffer pain, grieve loss, fear attack, experience sickness, and to die. God chose none of this for us. Thus, it is our wish, and not God's, that this is so, but we readily dismiss the idea that we chose it all. Our experience of this world seems to include both what is true as well as what is false. In fact, we hold that the false is true, which is how we experience our reality here as a body living in the world. If there is anything here we see as true, we determine truth must be false. Again, Jesus tells us, if we see it this way, then **". . . truth has lost its meaning,"** (W.152.3.8) and seems entirely inconsistent. While we blame this state on God, wondering how He could have created this world of suffering and grief, these contradictions were introduced entirely by us.

Jesus says we must learn to recognize and to accept that we choose our own suffering. This is important to get because it is the source of our salvation. Why does he say this? Because the only way out of the illusion is to accept the power of our minds to choose again. It is about accepting responsibility for our choice for separation. **"In this world the only remaining freedom is the freedom of choice; always between two choices or two voices."** (Clarification of Terms.1.7.1) He knows that we are going to have a strong reaction to this when he says, **"You may believe that this position is extreme, and too inclusive to be true."** (W.152.2.1) We do think this, but in asking us to acknowledge the power of our minds and to accept the truth, he assures us that this is the way to become liberated from pain and suffering. Thus, everything about the illusion, including the body and the world, cannot be real. We have great difficulty and resistance to this because to accept this thought is to question our own reality.

There is a lot in this Lesson about arrogance and humility. Jesus is basically saying that for us to believe we are victims of the world is arrogant and to accept our greatness and our magnitude is to be humble. This has come up before and is always kind of mind-blowing. God did not make this world of suffering and chaos, and if we believe He did, we are being arrogant, even though it seems like humility. Why would a loving God create a sinful, guilty, fearful, and suffering self, living in a body that will decay and die? It seems like we are being humble if we give God the credit for our condition. Yet we are insisting on our own weakness when we do and demanding that God take responsibility for this mess. This is arrogant because it contradicts who God is. To accept our power, given us by God, is to be humble by acknowledging who our Creator is. It is to surrender

our idea of what is true and real and accept His truth. **"And can you see what God created not."** (W.152.7.3) Why would we think we can see what was not created by God and therefore does not even exist? When we do see what is not there, we are hallucinating. We are simply imagining this outside picture as real when it is all a projection of an inward condition of sin and guilt in the mind. In our arrogance, we accuse God of being responsible for our unholy condition. This is the god the ego has made. It is a god that is jealous, angry, and retaliative, smiting his enemies. He is basically just a projection of the ego, only a bigger more powerful ego than we think we are.

Then Jesus goes on to ask, **"Is it not strange that you believe to think you made the world you see is arrogance?"** (W.152.6.1) We do wonder how it is possible we made this world. Jesus is asking us to see these things are not of God. He says it takes humility to accept this. What we are accepting is that God is right, and we are wrong. To accept that nothing we think we know is true, does take humility. It requires that we surrender our concepts and beliefs, because right now we do believe what we see is true. **"Let us today be truly humble, and accept what we have made as what it is."** (W.152.8.1) It is to recognize and accept our minds have power because they are part of God's Mind. As One with Him in reality, we created only the beautiful and eternal. In our humble acceptance of the truth of our reality, we no longer see this world as real. It simply disappears in our recognition that opposites can't be real. **"Decide but to accept your rightful place as co-creator of the universe, and all you think you made will disappear. What rises to awareness then will be all that there ever was, eternally as it is now."** (W.152.8.3-4) We acknowledge our grandeur and know the truth about ourselves when all that obscures it is released.

God created us as powerful beings of light and love. Thus, the power of decision is our own, meaning it is up to us to choose to do our part in the healing process. This requires we lay aside all self-concepts, all false perceptions, all roles, and all beliefs, and see them as false. They are all a lie, constantly informing us we are something we are not. If we are feeling sad, we can make another choice. If we are angry about something someone has done, we can give this thought over for healing and choose forgiveness. If we are grieving or suffering, we can recognize that God did not bring us this condition. If our bodies are sick, we can choose peace for our minds. If we tell ourselves we must be guilty because of what we believe we have done, we can know there is no need for guilt but only for Correction. We are not victims and these changing states are not our reality! They are all self-imposed! We have immense power, and to accept this power is to be humble in our greatness. Yes, we seem to have changed from how we knew ourselves at different stages in our lives, but can such transitory states be the truth about us? What hasn't changed is the constancy of our soul/spirit. The essence of what we are is the same as it has always been. Our radiance, our gentleness, and our perfect sinlessness is constant. The truth in you is and always has been constant, just waiting for your acceptance.

This Lesson is a powerhouse of amazing wisdom. Prior to being introduced to the Course, I had never read anything anywhere that has brought such consistency and clarity to what is offered through the Course. Getting this one Lesson can really change the way we see God, truth, the world, and our perceived reality, but it requires that **"Today we practice true humility, abandoning the false pretense by which the ego seeks to prove it arrogant."** (W.152.9.1) In other words, the ego would have us maintain our victimhood and diminish the power of our minds, arrogantly claiming we are sinful and weak, when God tells us instead that we are co-creators of the universe. This is not about anything physical, as Jesus is only talking about the universe of spirit.

In humility, we surrender everything we thought we knew and simply ask our Father to reveal Himself to us. This requires we give up our self-deceptions and wait in quiet. Jesus reminds us that we are the ones who made fear and thus we must be the ones who choose to undo it. **"It has already been said that you believe you cannot control fear because you yourself made it, and your belief in it seems to render it out of your control. Yet any attempt to resolve the error through attempting the mastery of fear is useless. In fact, it asserts the power of fear by the very assumption that it need be mastered. The true resolution rests entirely on mastery through love. In the interim, however, the sense of conflict is inevitable, since you have placed yourself in a position where you believe in the power of what does not exist."** (T.2.VII.4.1-5) (ACIM OE T.2.V.98)

We exercise patience today in waiting to hear His Voice, and to do so, we must give up all the frantic thoughts and concerns and allow peace to come. **"The memory of God comes to the quiet mind."** (T.23.I.1.1) (ACIM OE T.23.II.7) It takes effort and discipline of the mind and a willingness to look at how we deceive ourselves with our own thoughts that obscure the Thought of God. Today, we bring our self-deceptions and our illusions about ourselves to the truth so space can be made for the miracle. Each time we release our judgments of our brothers, we make the choice to see their innocence, and thus know our own. This is the power of our minds—to choose and decide against the ego so we can know ourselves as God's Son, together with every brother we meet.

"The power of decision is my own. This day I will accept myself as what my Father's Will created me to be." (W.152.11.3-4)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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