



LESSON 179

Review V ~ Lesson 167 and Lesson 168

[167] There is one life, and that I share with God.

[168] Your grace is given me. I claim it now.

Sarah's Commentary:

Taking passages from the Course that resonate deeply, contemplating the meaning of the words, and applying them in situations where we are tempted to listen to the voice of the ego, change the way we live in the world. This process can effectively break the power of the thoughts, which produce fear and anxiety. They are obsessive thoughts, going around and around in the mind in well-worn paths, creating experiences of fear and anxiety and reinforcing the beliefs we hold in the mind. This becomes a cycle where what I think I see, what I see I experience and what I experience I think. It is a loop described in this way by Regina Dawn Akers. What these Lessons offer is a way to break out of this pattern. **"That you *do* listen to the voice of your ego is demonstrated by your attitudes, your feelings and your behavior."** (T.4.IV.1.2) (ACIM OE T.4.V.56) When we change our thoughts, we change our lives because everything follows from thought. **"I [Jesus] have said that you cannot change your mind by changing your behavior, but I have also said, and many times, that you *can* change your mind."** (T.4.IV.2.1) (ACIM T.4.V.57)

It is a process of taking the words from the head to the heart. What this means to me is that I must put the words into practice, so I can experience the deep resonance in my heart of the meaning behind the words. I find it interesting when people feel that they have to move away from the Course, believing it is "too intellectual." Without question, the Course takes a level of intellectual understanding, but for me, it has been a form of cognitive therapy, which is based on the theory that much of how we feel is determined by what we think. Thus, our feelings follow our thoughts. Yes, it takes contemplation and reflection to understand what is being said, and it requires we take time with the reading. The ego mind is often confounded by the wording of the Course, but I believe that the thoughts offered by Jesus, to a great extent, bypass our thinking mind and reach a place of inner knowing in us.

I love the way a friend of mine put it when he wrote, "Do not allow the lack of intellectual understanding stop you from completing the Course. All the understanding you need will be given you precisely when it will serve you best. What the ego understands is largely illusion. It is to the realm of the soul that a Course in Miracles calls us. The Text will heal you before you understand it. ACIM communicates more at the level of the heart than the mind. The intellectual concepts are the candy to keep your mind occupied while the course transforms you."

When Jesus says, "**There is one life, and that I share with God,**" (W.179 [167]) he is saying there is no death because life has no opposite. What we call life and death in the world is all illusory. The life we seem to be living could be seen as a stage play—a dream—where events come and go and various characters show up in our drama. But we can learn to observe it more and engage in it less and less. When we look at it without judgment from above the battleground and observe its unreality, we disengage from the drama. When we look from the perspective of the dreamer, rather than from that of the character in the dream, we can see that nothing here is serious. Jesus calls them all children's toys. "**There is a time when childhood should be passed and gone forever. Seek not to retain the toys of children. Put them all away, for you have need of them no more. The dream of judgment is a children's game, in which the child becomes the father, powerful, but with the little wisdom of a child.**" (T.29.IX.6.1-4) Yes, it seems serious for the characters in the dream, but the reality is that we are not the characters and nothing going on here is true.

Anytime we are anything less than joyful, we acknowledge death in some form. Our one life, which we share with God, is perfectly at peace and in a state of joy where we have always been. In other words, there is only one life. The lifetimes that we seem to have lived are all dream states. As Jesus says in the Manual for Teachers, "**In the ultimate sense, reincarnation is impossible. There is no past or future, and the idea of birth into a body has no meaning either once or many times. Reincarnation cannot then be true in any real sense.**" (M.24.1.1-3)

We are created perfect. "**As we were, so are we now and will forever be.**" (W.167.12.2) When we experience our own perfection, however briefly, the veil is lifted for an instant. It is available to us now. It does not wait on time but only on our readiness and willingness. His gift is ours, simply waiting to be acknowledged. This Lesson reminds us that we are still in God's Mind because ideas leave not their source. Given this, our nature is like that of God. His Creations cannot have attributes that are not of the Creator. While our experience is that our emotions alternate throughout the day, depending on seemingly external circumstances, our reality is unchangeable. Our emotional state is attributed to events, people, and situations outside ourselves that we blame for how we feel. The truth is the situations in our lives serve our need to have something or someone to blame instead of taking responsibility for how we feel.

"His holy home we strive to keep today as He established it, and wills it be forever and forever." (W.167.11.1) In other words, we can bring our mistaken perceptions back into the mind, that someone or something "out there" is responsible for our upset. As we bring our projections back, we can see that any conflict seemingly external to the mind is our own inner conflict projected on the world. Instead of trying to solve it out there where it cannot be solved, we take responsibility for our conflicted thoughts and bring them to the Holy Spirit to be healed. Healing requires that we take responsibility for our state of mind. Regardless of what is going on in our lives, it is only our perceptions of the people and situations that need to be healed. We have given meaning to neutral events and we can now withdraw the meaning so the mind can be brought back to peace. Yet nothing can be undone for which we will not take responsibility.

"Your grace is given me. I claim it now. Father, I come to You. And You will come to me who ask. I am the Son You love." (W.168.6.5-9) These are the words we can pray as we spend our time today with God in silence. **"God speaks to us. Shall we not speak to**

Him?" (W.168.1.1-2) Today, we return to the quiet place in our minds where we are in the Presence of God. That place is always available to us. God is not distant. His presence is the stillness within the mind where all is well.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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