



LESSON 191
I am the holy Son of God Himself.

Sarah's Commentary:

There is a sense of urgency in this Lesson, but it is not about making us feel bad about our progress. Jesus only wants to encourage us not to delay our happiness. He makes a strong plea for our release so we can release our brothers and sisters. Our brothers and sisters are released when our minds are released because there is only one Son of God. We have imprisoned the mind because of our belief in sin and guilt that we project on the world, and now we see the world imprisoning us. We don't think of ourselves as the holy Son of God because we have denied our identity, choosing instead to align with the ego mind. We think that the only holy Son is Jesus. Yet in the Course, Jesus says that he is our elder brother, who took this journey we are now taking, and thus he can show us the way. He showed us by his resurrection that we are not bodies but eternal, spiritual beings. He demonstrated the invulnerability that is ours as well, given us in our creation. Jesus says he is no different than we are, and where he is, we are too, as we have the same nature.

When we awaken from this dream, we too will realize we have all power (W.191.9.1) and have had it all along. It has always been with us. **"There is nothing that you cannot do."** (W.191.9.2) Jesus relies on us to escape from the hell we have made. (W.191.7.1) When we are released, everyone is released with us. How can they not when the world is just a dream projected from our minds?

Jesus helps us release the dream we are dreaming. By turning to him for help, rather than worshiping him, which he asks us not to do, we can reclaim our identity which is the same as his. We do this by giving him the blocks to the awareness of who we are as God's holy Son. This means we are called to look at thoughts of shame, anger, betrayal, embarrassment, grievance, victimhood, specialness, jealousy, competition, need, lack, desire, and any other self-attacking thought we hold that blocks realization of the Self we are. He asks us to lay our thoughts of guilt and shame at his feet. To do so, we must be honest and have the courage to look behind our defenses.

The thoughts we hold in the mind are projected on the world and mirror a world that is chaotic in which we feel cast about by events we can't control and where we see evidence of our frailty, sadness, hopelessness, disappointments, and ultimately death. **"There is no sound that does not speak of frailty within you and without; no breath you draw that does not seem to bring you nearer death; no hope you hold but will dissolve in tears."** (W.191.2.6)

"What have you done that this should be your world? What have you done that this is what you see?" (W.191.2.1-2) We have denied our reality as the Son of God, and now, what

we see around us is a witness to the chaos within. We have chosen to identify with the ego and with that choice, we see ourselves as more powerful than God. The mind is powerful and believes it is now a body and personality, living in a world of bodies. While we can be unaware of what we are, we can't change what is true about us that we are a perfect creation of God.

Looking from the perspective of the world, we see a reflection of ourselves where our magnificence is denied. The world reflects our judgments, fears, and chaotic thinking. Is it any wonder that in this closed system, and after a lifetime in a world that keeps reinforcing our ego thoughts, it is hard to believe we are anything but what we have come to think we are--a body and personality? We certainly don't think of ourselves as the holy Son of God, but this seeming bondage we experience can't hold us. Today, we declare our release. **"For he who can accept his true Identity is truly saved. And his salvation is the gift he gives to everyone, in gratitude to Him Who pointed out the way to happiness that changed his whole perspective of the world."** (W.191.5.3-4)

Jesus pleads with us to join with him in the holy instant where he is. Outside of this dream, the memory of who we are can be found. He is in our minds and pleads with us to leave the darkness for a while so we can have some respite and recall our holiness. He asks that we rise above the world and **"all the worldly thoughts that hold it prisoner."** (W.191.5.1) We hold ourselves prisoner when we pursue idols of specialness that we think will bring us what we want in the dream. He wants us to see that they bring us nothing but despair. The ego tells us, while we have not yet understood the right combination of events to be happy, if we just keep on looking, maybe one day we will find that combination. Perhaps a different home, a new relationship, another job, or more money would bring us what we want. However, seeking for substitutes that we believe will make us happy binds us to the illusion and keeps us in a state of despair, as we keep seeking for what we will never find in idols.

When we see the world as a classroom for healing instead of a place to fulfill our dreams that can never be fulfilled, everything in our lives becomes a backdrop to expose the mind through simple honesty. Now, nothing that happens is seen as good or bad but only as a curriculum to show us what is in the mind, all to be given over to the Holy Spirit. Look at your life with Him, who offers His help to look at the dark thoughts without condemning ourselves. He is a symbol of God's love in our minds.

If I am feeling insecure, fearful, unworthy, needy, angry, full of pride, and special, I need to look at what I am holding in my mind without condemning myself. I need to look without analyzing or judging myself. The thoughts I hold about myself are not what I am. They may take up only one percent of my mind, but this is the part the ego has claimed—the part with which I identify. This little corner of the mind we keep away from our grandeur, and instead we **"keep it as a hospital for pain; a sickly place where living things must come at last to die."** (W.190.6.6) We think that this small part is what defines us because this image of ourselves is reinforced by the world. The world is now seen as the cause of what we are, yet only our minds are the cause. We have reversed cause and effect. We are the ones who have used the world cruelly to meet our needs, all the while projecting responsibility onto the world for treating us badly. Because we prefer to see cruelty in the world, rather than in ourselves, we think this is how we can maintain our innocence.

To heal and awaken, we need to learn to look at the ego mind without fear. Any uncertainty or confusion that arises needs to be looked at in the same way. When we look at our thoughts without fear we are looking with Jesus who holds the lamp so we can look at the darkness with no

judgment. It is not what we are. We don't need to seek for what is true, but only for the false. When we can look at our thoughts without fear, healing can take place. To look at our thoughts is to allow everything to be brought to awareness without telling stories about the meaning of the thoughts and emotions nor to deny or justify them. We don't need to try to be compassionate or loving because that is the very nature of our minds. What we need to do is relinquish our investment in the thoughts that block the love and compassion in us. When the blocks are put on the altar, **"All your past except its beauty is gone, and nothing is left but a blessing."** (T.5.IV.8.2) (ACIM OE T.5.VI.58) That is the outcome of forgiveness.

This Lesson describes us as small, fragile beings who are here for a short while, assailed by the world, only to be rewarded at the end by death. It is a pretty discouraging picture of "life." When we align with the ego, we believe we are guilty and victims of this world. Of course, the ego can't afford for us to see the world as bleakly as described in this Lesson, so it throws in some special love relationships and dreams and hopes and small pleasures to keep us believing there is a possibility of true happiness in the world. Then, we resent the world for shattering our dreams, and we blame ourselves, or others, for having kept us from the happiness we seek. Denial of our true reality has kept us in this prison. Now we are called to forgive the world and everyone in it for what it has not done to us.

By accepting who we really are, we release ourselves and our brothers from bondage. We become a demonstration of peace. Others will be attracted to the peace they see in us and will choose it for themselves. We offer the world mercy (W.191.9.4) so its mercy will shine on us. We can't just look at our suffering or the suffering of others and say it does not matter because it is all an illusion. While it is an illusion, we are not currently experiencing it this way, and therefore, we must not deny our experience.

We are called to join with Jesus today. (W.191.10.4) He tells us, **"Your glory is the light that saves the world."** (W.191.10.5) **"Is not your heart willing to bring your weary brothers rest?"** (W.191.10.8) How willing are we? How important have we made this goal for ourselves? How big is our commitment to do this healing work? **"There is nothing that you cannot do."** (W.191.9.2) The power is in us to make this choice. **"The power of decision is your one remaining freedom as a prisoner of this world."** (T.12.VII.9.1) (ACIM OE T.11.VIII.70)

We keep ourselves in hell when we hold grievances and forget that we are the ones dreaming the dream. How small are the events that can disturb us! How insignificant are our complaints! Yet the ego hangs onto them like a dog with a bone! **"I am the holy Son of God Himself. I cannot suffer, cannot be in pain; I cannot suffer loss, nor fail to do all that salvation asks."** (W.191.7.3-4) Do we believe this? Perhaps not yet, but it is the truth because we were created holy.

Jesus says that much of our time is spent in playing **"the game of death, of being helpless, pitifully tied to dissolution in a world which shows no mercy to you."** (W.191.9.3) It is a game of victimhood. We tell pitiful tales of our lives and take these stories so seriously, believing we will then be seen as innocent victims of what others have done to us. It is a role we play in this dream, and we want others to sympathize with us. **"This sickly picture of yourself is carefully preserved by the ego, whose image it is and which it loves, and placed outside you in the world. And to this world must you adjust as long as you believe this picture is outside, and has you at its mercy."** (T.20.III.5.6-7) (ACIM OE T.20.IV.20) He goes on to say that if this were indeed the merciless world seen outside ourselves, then we should be fearful, but we are the ones who made it merciless by projecting our thoughts on it. Now it can all be corrected when we ask to see through the eyes of Christ instead of our own.

We are called to extend mercy and not to look for it in the world. **"Yet when you accord it mercy, will its mercy shine on you."** (W.191.9.4) That is how we find our way out of this cycle of grievance and retaliation, control and despair, with Jesus showing us there is a way out. In fact, he tells us that hell is easily undone. (W.191.7.1) We just need to truly believe one thought, such as **"I am as God created me,"** (W.94) and not what we have made of ourselves.

All of our experiences are helpful, even if we seem to fall into a black hole. I find that when I am experiencing painful situations in my life, they drive me further into this work and motivate me to heal my mind. Don't resist any of it. To resist is to say it should not be happening. The world gives us everything we need for our awakening because our thoughts have brought it all into being. Often, our greatest leaps forward spiritually are made at our most difficult times. These can offer us a certain kind of grace, even if, at the time, the experience feels ruthless. Our greatest advances are often made when we are brought to our knees. Sometimes it seems like that is what it takes. If we see these as opportunities to go deeper into our pain and learn to go past our defenses through deep inquiry, these events truly become huge gifts. When we accept that we don't know how to do any of this on our own anymore, the ego is unhinged, and we are happily humbled.

We have often talked about the apparent difficulty of trying to understand the Course. When we read a Lesson like this, it seems to be the only one we need in order to be released. Yet because of our resistance, we need the many approaches taken by this Course to undermine the ego thought system and help us to increase our willingness and our desire.

We are here to bless. We are here to bring the light of our glory to everyone, and we do it by being willing to be released from our own hell. The world is waiting for each of us to find the mercy in ourselves. To give and to receive are one. In extending kindness and mercy, we receive this gift for ourselves.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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