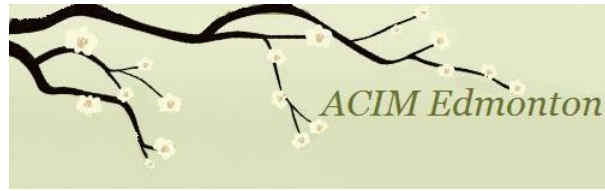


ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 347

**Anger must come from judgment. Judgment is
The weapon I would use against myself
To keep all miracles away from me.**

Sarah's Commentary:

Today is a day of listening and bypassing the noise of the ego so we can hear the gentle Voice for God affirming we are the Son He loves. As Jesus says **"You have the right to all the universe; to perfect peace, complete deliverance from all effects of sin; and to the life eternal, joyous and complete in every way, as God appointed for His Holy Son. This is the only justice Heaven knows, and all the Holy Spirit brings to earth."** (T.25.VIII.14.1-2) (ACIM OE T.25.IX.77) But it is not enough just to hear it and say we believe it as the truth. We need to experience how deeply we are loved. Through the holy instant, a moment outside of the dream of this world, we feel the grace of God. This is made possible when we commit moment by moment to choose compassion, kindness, harmony, peace, and patience. We set our goal daily for healing and peace through the application of the daily Lessons that we are given in this Course. We stay vigilant for God and His Kingdom; and when we do, we willingly give to the Holy Spirit all the ways we judge and withhold love.

"The Holy Spirit can use all that you give to Him for your salvation. But He cannot use what you withhold, for He cannot take it from you without your willingness. For if He did, you would believe He wrested it from you against your will. And so you would not learn it is your will to be without it." (T.25.VIII. 1.1-4) (ACIM OE T.25.IX.63) Nothing happens without our agreement. Don was expressing deep gratitude to me today about the transformation he has realized in his life through our relationship. I told him that nothing would have transformed for him if he was not willing to receive the messages of the Holy Spirit. If my goal was to change him or anyone else, it could never be achieved because it is up to each of us how much we willingly surrender the ego. We need to be as gentle with a brother as Jesus is with us. His compassion for our confusion is without limit. He says, **"But remember salvation is not needed by the saved. You are not called upon to do what one divided still against himself would find impossible."** (T.25.VIII.2.4-5) (ACIM OE T.25.IX.64)

We become happy learners when we look at everything that is unlike love as another opportunity for healing. We continually surrender our thoughts of judgment and specialness to the Presence within, which shines them away. When we stubbornly hold onto grievances, we choose to be in hell. **"At least I can decide I do not like what I feel now."** (T.30.I.8.2) (ACIM OE T.30.16) This paves the way to realize that we have made a mistake in our decision to hold a grievance and we say instead, **"I want another way to look at this."** (T.30.I.11.4) (ACIM OE T.30.23) Now we willingly ask for help to heal our resistance. We admit that we don't like how we feel, and thus

we remember what we want and make space for the miracle. Jesus asks us why we would want to hold onto the insane belief of wanting to be right when we are clearly wrong.

"Miracles honor you because you are lovable. They dispel illusions about yourself and perceive the light in you. They thus atone for your errors by freeing you from your nightmares. By releasing your mind from the imprisonment of your illusions, they restore your sanity." (T.1.I.33.4) (ACIM OE T.1.I.46) We keep the miracle away when we judge and hold onto anger. We justify our anger and see ourselves as victims of what others do; but what we see is not the truth. To see the false is to be in the wrong mind because we are seeing what does not exist. This means we have made a judgment that is not true. Everything we see comes from judgment and none of it is true. Judgment is how we keep ourselves in misery. We set goals for happiness. Yet in our insanity, we choose pain instead. We judge the events of the day, which is precisely how we keep happiness away. We choose not to be happy, as insane as that sounds. As Jesus says, we want what goes against our will. **"Father, I want what goes against my will, and do not want what is my will to have."** (W.347.1.1) Our real will is to know who we are. It is to know our Being as love.

Jesus is very clear and direct with us when he says that our minds are sick. **"Straighten my mind, my Father. It is sick."** (W.347.1.2-3) It is a clear statement of the insanity of the false self. We want what goes against our own best interests because, ultimately, we don't know what will make us happy. We pursue the very things that continue to bring pain and distress. If we saw this clearly, we would surely see the insanity of it and admit that our minds are sick. Until we see this is the case, we are not willing to release our pursuits and our judgments. Jesus keeps trying to help us see we are unhappy. We don't see it because we have made an adjustment to this insane world. It is not unlike a mental patient, who decides to be happy in the asylum, believing that is where his safety and security are.

It is this sense of safety, comfort, and self-gratification that we have established for ourselves in the world that makes us resistant to leave it. We have been taught to conform to society rather than listen to our inner guidance. We have built layers of protection against the truth. To access the truth requires going through the fear and resistance of letting go of control. Eventually, the inner calling becomes so compelling, there is no choice but to respond. To ignore it brings more pain. Our external situation eventually reflects our inner conflict and we come to see that what is reflected in the world starts in our own mind. When life brings us to our knees, our motivation to choose to answer the Call for a better way is increased. The only meaningful purpose we can embrace is to know ourselves.

We may have become comfortable with where we are now in our spiritual journey. We may feel we have found a place of comfort and safety in our study and practice of the Course. We see that we have more peace than we had in the past. Yet in this place of comfort, we may feel reluctant to go deeper, and uncover more layers of the mind. We may have settled into a happier state and resist taking the next step in undoing the ego thought system and experiencing freedom. To be a happy learner is to stay vigilant to all the ways we try to keep ourselves safe and to learn to welcome new opportunities to go deeper. This is a journey inward and requires more courage than we are accustomed to. We are going into unfamiliar territory, leaving the old and the familiar. It is a process of discovery. Every situation shows us some inner conflict that we may have been avoiding. To continue to avoid this inner conflict is to invite more pain and suffering. Allow it to be seen and healed rather than pushing it down. We are called to go past the inner barriers that stand in the way of our reality, but we don't go alone. The Holy Spirit, our own inner Resource, is with us always.

Jesus assures us that our happiness can only be found through forgiveness. We don't yet completely believe this, so we need help to walk through the fear and resistance. Our natural state of mind is peace. We actively keep peace away each time we attack a brother with our judgments and our anger and each time we react to any seeming attack on us. The thing is, we will continue to make judgments and be triggered by people and events in our lives, and it is only a problem when we judge ourselves. Instead of defending ourselves, we are called to look at it all as just another opportunity for healing. It is not helpful to judge anything going on in our lives as wrong or bad. It is all useful for healing and it has all been called into our lives by our own decision.

Jesus always reminds us that we are completely innocent---*now*. Therefore, he assures us that there is no need to manufacture false innocence by projecting guilt. However, the ego has told us that we are guilty, and says that by projecting guilt on others, we will be relieved of it. Of course, the law of love tells us that what we give, we receive. It is a universal law, with no exceptions so when we project guilt on our brothers we keep it and hurt ourselves.

We are not being asked to deny what we see, but only to recognize that we are constantly giving our interpretations to events, people, and situations that have no meaning except what we give them. The world is neutral. The interpretations we give to what seems to be happening are based on beliefs that we hold about ourselves. When I give my interpretation of an event to the Holy Spirit, He always reflects another way for me to see it. While our interpretations bring us distress, we nevertheless sometimes make the insane decision to suffer because it allows us to blame our suffering on what others have done to us and hold them to account instead of ourselves. This is how we actively choose to keep the miracle away from ourselves, and this is truly insane. That is why we need to acknowledge, "***Father, I want what goes against my will***, [anger, attack, specialness, holding grievances] ***and do not want what is my will to have*** [peace, miracles, joy]." (W.347.1.1) We want it because it keeps us safe from Love. It keeps our special individual self in control.

Jesus asks, "**Can nothing give rise to anger? Hardly so. Remember, then, teacher of God, that anger recognizes a reality that is not there; yet is the anger certain witness that you do believe in it as a fact. Now is escape impossible, until you see you have responded to your own interpretation, which you have projected on an outside world. Let this grim sword be taken from you now. There is no death. This sword does not exist. The fear of God is causeless. But His Love is Cause of everything beyond all fear, and thus forever real and always true.**" (Manual for Teachers.17.9.5-13)

Today, let us bring our attention to how we actively resist our well-being. "**What is temptation but the wish to stay in hell and misery?**" (T.31.VII.10.1) (ACIM OE T.31.VII.78) Until we are willing to assume complete and total responsibility for everything that happens to us, we deny that it is actually our wish to hold onto misery. Yet if we really look honestly at our thoughts, we see that we choose anger and attack deliberately to hide from God's Love, which we believe will annihilate us. As long as we identify with the body and the world, rather than with the eternal Self, we try to prove God wrong. We defend against His Love. We try to prove we can't be the eternal Self He says we are and we do it through death of the body. This internal conflict, between our wrong-minded thinking and the Love that awaits us, must be resolved. We do this by our willingness to look honestly at our inner motivations and intentions, which is not for the weak. It is truly a hero's journey because it takes great courage. None of us loves to go into the darkness, but when we come to the other side of it, then the joy, the trust, and the lightness of spirit are all worth every step we take as we navigate this difficult terrain.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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