



LESSON 126

All that I give is given to myself.

Sarah's Commentary:

Over the years, as I have watched my process with the application of these Lessons, I have noticed how much resistance I have had in following the instructions for the Lesson practice as laid out by Jesus. I have tended to do the practice the way I believed worked for me. I had resistance to following the structure, and I noticed my reluctance to complying with the careful design laid out in each Lesson. In other words, I put myself in charge of the process instead of surrendering to the plan provided by Jesus. What makes me think that my way and my process is right? Could it be my issue with authority and being told what to do? It is not at all hard for me to see this is the case. Jesus says that the authority problem is the root of all evil and not money as we have believed it to be. Jesus asks us to, "**Be willing to be taught.**" (W.126.10.3)

It is helpful to look at the many forms resistance takes. It may be forgetting the Lesson, deciding to do it our way, or projecting our own understanding of what we have learned in the past onto what we read. I see the resistance in my mind to "being told what to do." Clearly, I like to do things my way. It certainly is an indication of the level of fear I have of waking up from this dream. I see how attached I am to my way, my specialness, my unique self, my values and beliefs. It is an investment in this world that I still hang onto. Having said that, there is certainly a significant increase in my level of trust with an abundance of miracles in my life. **"Every miracle that you accomplish speaks to you of the Fatherhood of God. Every healing thought that you accept, either from your brother or in your own mind, teaches you that you are God's Son. In every hurtful thought you hold, wherever you perceive it, lies the denial of God's Fatherhood and of your Sonship."** (T.11.II.2.4-6) (ACIM OE T.10.III.17) This is how trust and confidence are developed as our perception is changed.

And thus, with time and patience, the teaching has taken on a deeper, more profound meaning for me. In accepting the power of forgiveness and experiencing many miracles, the shifts taking place in my mind have brought more peace and joy. I find it is increasingly painful to compare, judge, attack, and try to benefit at another's expense. It makes me realize the message of this Lesson even more fully, which is that I can only give to myself. **"All that I give is given to myself."** (W.126) There is only One Self. My brother and I are One, and what I give to him, I give to myself. When I attack him, I attack and hurt myself.

The Lesson today is pivotal to appreciating just how wrong we are about everything. This realization is essential to our willingness to listen and to be taught. This Lesson, more than perhaps any other, is significant in overcoming the ego. It is one we should really give our attention to. I say this because Jesus is very clear in his statement, **"Today's idea, completely alien to the ego and the thinking of the world, is crucial to the thought reversal that this course will bring about."** (W.126.1.1) In other words, we will not see the importance of it until we sincerely apply the Lesson. Oh yes, we might at this point, be able to understand the ideas

conceptually and even have some significant success with forgiveness, but Jesus goes on to explain why we still don't get it. He explains how we don't understand when we attack a brother, we are hurting ourselves. In the same vein, we don't see that when we give love, we receive it. In other words, we don't see that there is only One of us here.

We share one identity—the Christ Self. As such, there is only one mind, and there can be nothing outside of mind. As long as we still see ourselves as different from our brothers, we think that we are completely safe from our projections on them. The ego has taught us that "ideas leave their source" in the mind. The fact is, what we give our brothers, we keep. This is a complete reversal of our thought system. Because it is a reversal of everything we currently hold as true, it is very challenging for us.

The thought system of the ego is to see differences and make separation real in our minds, yet the truth is we are all the same. It is entirely based on belief in differences, private thoughts, and separate interests. It started with the thought, "I am separate from God and different from Him. Now I have a separate will and my own kingdom which I, not God, rule. There can only be one reality, so if He is real, how can I also be real and exist? It must be either Him or me—one or the other. Both can't be true." This is the basis for the thought of separation that came with the tiny mad idea. **"Into eternity, where all is one, there crept a tiny, mad idea, at which the Son of God remembered not to laugh."** (T.27.VIII.6.2) (ACIM OE T.27.IX.82) It was the beginning of separation, differences, and competition. Time seems to have been made real in that moment and it was all taken as serious. It now appears that a part of God can attack Itself.

As a result, we don't see our brothers' appeals for help as our own. We don't see their problems as having anything to do with us. We see them as guilty sinners who deserve punishment and attack. They are seen as the guilty ones, not us. Our hope is that God will punish them and his wrath will ultimately fall on them rather than on us. While this is not a conscious thought, it is the basis for our investment in seeing others guilty. By comparison, we see ourselves as victimized and betrayed by those who hurt us. The guilt in our minds is now on them. In this scenario, our hope is that we will get off scot-free while they will experience God's punishment.

We can easily find those we can blame for the condition of our lives. We are loath to see their sins as our own self-attacking thoughts and projections of our guilt. We think we can judge their "evil deeds," and yet remain apart from this judgment. This is because we have forgotten the origin of our self-condemnation, which is the guilt in our own minds. We have chosen not to see it there but see it in the figures in the dream we are dreaming. This is precisely how the ego set it all up. Knowing we could not live with such a load of guilt in the mind, the ego devised a plan to get "rid" of it by seeing the guilt in our brothers. To make it all seem real, the ego gave us separate bodies with senses to convince us of the reality of the evil in the world. **"It seems to you that other people are apart from you, and able to behave in ways which have no bearing on your thoughts, nor yours on theirs."** (W.126.2.2)

Jesus explains that when we see sin in others as real and then try to overlook it or forgive it, this is actually a form of attack. He calls it, **"Forgiveness-to-Destroy."** (Song of Prayer.2.II) I spoke about it before in Lesson 121. It is basically about being charitable to someone whom we see as less worthy so we might see ourselves as superior and even more spiritual. **"He has not earned your charitable tolerance, which you bestow on one unworthy of the gift, because his sins have lowered him beneath a true equality with you."** (W.126.3.3) Our superior stance in relation to another is an attack. While we may think we are offering forgiveness, we are actually benefiting ourselves. We make the sin real in someone else and then maintain our specialness at the expense of our brother. I become the determiner of whether you deserve my charitable notion of forgiveness or not, which is based on my judgment of your worthiness. To a

large extent, this kind of forgiveness is based on a whim. It is how the Bible defined God—sometimes punishing and sometimes merciful, depending on His mood. It is a situation where we have made God in our own image. We have told Him who He is, according to our own projection on Him.

In summary, we believe: 1. Other people are apart from us. 2. Their thoughts have no bearing on ours. 3. There is no direct impact of our attitudes on theirs. 4. Their call for help has nothing to do with our own need for help. 5. We can judge their sin without affecting our perception of ourselves. In other words, we believe we can remain perfectly at peace, condemning others with no effect on ourselves. Isn't this the way we mostly think? Buying into the ego thought system is buying into the belief that we are separate, unique individuals with separate interests. We believe we are bodies, living in a world of time and space, birth and death, experiencing pain, pleasure, vulnerability, and problems, all of which we see as real.

When forgiveness is offered as a charity we don't receive true forgiveness for ourselves and there is no Correction of the guilt in our minds. We may feel self-righteous but we won't feel true innocence, joining, or Oneness with our brothers. **"If this be true, forgiveness has no grounds on which to rest dependably and sure."** (W.126.5.1) In fact, **"It is an eccentricity, in which you sometimes choose to give indulgently an undeserved reprieve."** (W.126.5.2) The guilt in our own minds is now hidden and protected from our awareness and seen instead in our brother. It is no wonder we don't understand course-based forgiveness. **"As you see it, it is but a check upon overt attack, without requiring correction in your mind."** (W.126.6.2) In other words, we see nothing wrong in ourselves that needs to be changed. We see the problem "out there" having nothing to do with us.

When we rail against the world and the guilt we see in others, we can have no peace. Peace can only be known when the guilt in our mind is healed. False forgiveness **"has no power to restore your unity with him to your awareness."** (W.126.6.5) The goal of this Course is to heal the guilt in our own minds, which cannot occur when we see forgiveness as a charitable act we bestow on another. **"It is not what God intended it to be for you."** (W.126.6.6) God intended forgiveness as a gift we give ourselves as healing of our own mind. True forgiveness offers us, **". . . happiness, a quiet mind, a certainty of purpose, and a sense of worth and beauty that transcends the world."** (W.122.1.4)

True forgiveness requires us to take back our projections and take responsibility for them and release them to the Holy Spirit. This frees us from continuing to hurt *ourselves*. **"You would understand the means by which salvation comes to you, and would not hesitate to use it now."** (W.126.1.3) How we see others has a profound effect on how we see *ourselves*. When we condemn others, we lose our peace of mind. Surely, it is not something we want to choose for ourselves, and yet in our insanity, we do.

When we know we are innocent we see it in others. In other words, we see others with vision. It is not about pretending that we don't see wrongdoing in the world. While we will still see attack, we can know the innate innocence of others. We see beyond appearances, which is to see with vision. It means to overlook error. When we lack confidence in our brothers, we deny the power of their minds to change, and thus we deny the power of our own mind to change. The gift of forgiveness is really for ourselves. **"Yet would He ask you for a gift unless it was for you?"** (W.126.7.2) True forgiveness is the way we achieve the gifts salvation has to offer, including the gift of happiness. **"And true forgiveness, . . . must heal the mind that gives, for giving is receiving."** (W.126.7.5) When we bring our projections back to the mind, take responsibility for them there, and willingly turn them over to the Holy Spirit, then only **"What remains as**

unreceived has not been given, but what has been given must have been received," (W.126.7.6) because our minds are joined.

As I was writing this, a friend dropped by in great distress because he said his boss was constantly criticizing him. Thus, he sees his boss as guilty of attacking him and he, in turn, defends his position as one of innocence and feels completely misunderstood and victimized. What my friend chooses not to see are his own self-attacking thoughts, which he sees as outside himself and played out by the boss. His boss is playing the role my friend has assigned to him. He is acting out the attack in my friend's mind and seeing it in the split-off part of himself, now seen in his boss. The answer is to take back our projections and be willing to see how they reflect some aspects of ourselves. It is an invitation to inquire about the root cause of our own distress coming from our self-attacking thoughts. We start with the premise that anyone with a healed mind would not be upset. When we are triggered, there is an opportunity to investigate the unhealed beliefs we are holding in the mind. We are being called to change our perception of the other so we can change our perception of ourselves. This is the gift of salvation, and the means are true forgiveness, where we take complete responsibility for the outward picture of our own inward condition. Jesus says, **"You will need help to make this meaningful, because it is so alien to the thoughts to which you are accustomed."** (W.126.8.2)

We are cautioned by Jesus when he says, **"Do not leave any spot of pain hidden from His Light, and search your mind carefully for any thoughts you may fear to uncover. For He will heal every little thought you have kept to hurt you and cleanse it of its littleness, restoring it to the magnitude of God."** (T.13.III.7.5-6) (ACIM OE T.12.III.17) This requires true humility, courage and willingness to accept the Correction of the Holy Spirit. We must learn to recognize how we use others to keep ourselves from the love we are. It takes great learning because, as Jesus says, it is alien to our current way of thinking. We benefit in this process when we join with our mighty companions to support us in our inquiry.

"And if you only catch a tiny glimpse of the release that lies in the idea we practice today, this is a day of glory for the world." (W.126.8.5) Exempt no one from your love. Choose to join with your brothers rather than set yourselves apart. We are learning to give up the insanity of the ego. We are willing to see that we have been wrong about ourselves and are willing to **"Give Him your faith today, and ask Him that He share your practicing in truth today."** (W.126.8.4) Ask for help today whenever you see a problem "out there." Be willing to see it originating in your own mind and recognize that it can only be forgiven there. Others are quite simply a reflection of what is unhealed in our own minds. The help you ask for in any situation is always for yourself. Forgiveness offers us the power to release our own minds from bondage to the ego and is of infinite worth to us. **"And true forgiveness, as the means by which it [Salvation] is attained, must heal the mind that gives, for giving is receiving."** (W.126.7.5)

Our judgments and attacks are all a defense against Love, yet we yearn to know the Self we are in truth. The conflict in our minds will continue until we recognize and accept this and make forgiveness our first priority in every situation. Again, we do this by being ". . . **willing to be taught."** (W.126.10.3) **"Be glad to hear the Voice of truth and healing speak to you, and you will understand the words He speaks, and recognize He speaks your words to you."** (W.126.10.4) In other words, the Holy Spirit is in our minds, known to us and not separate from us. He is our own Voice in the right mind.

We are urged to make this day of special value to us. We must set our goal today to remember, **"All I give is given to myself. The Help I need to learn that this is true is with me now. And I will trust Him."** (W.126.11.3-5) This means that we must become willing to go

through this day and ask for help of the Holy Spirit throughout the day to shine away all disturbing thoughts that keep us blind to the grandeur of our reality as the Son of God. It means that we choose to stay vigilant with regard to any distressing thoughts.

Today we commit to watching our judgments and attacks and accepting them as our own secret sins that we are holding against our brothers. Any attack on a brother is never justified. When you see anyone outside of yourself, seeming to rob you of your peace, be willing to bring your misperceptions to the holy altar and place them there for healing. Be willing to see that you share the same interests as your brother. We have all been taught wrongly. All expressions of strong feelings and opinions we hold, either good or bad, are illusory and simply reflect our past learning. Real strength is in the stillness of our minds where truth resides.

Again, remind yourself as often as you can that you have a goal today, an aim which makes this day of special value to you and all your brothers. Do not forget this goal for long, but tell yourself: ***"All that I give is given to myself. The Help I need to learn that this is true is with me now. And I will trust in Him."*** (W.126.11.3-5) Then, enter the stillness and hear the Holy Spirit speak to you.

Love and blessings, Sarah
huemmert@shaw.ca

Published in DAILY LESSON MAILING by <http://www.jcim.net>
JOIN MAILING LIST HERE: <http://bitly.com/CIMSMailingList-Signup>