

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 145 Review IV Lessons 129 and Lessons 130

Sarah's Commentary:

Today, we look at the question of how much we really want the real world that is beyond this world we made? How strong is our intent? How much earnestness do we devote to the practice? Rumi says, "Come, come, whoever you are, wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving, it doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, even if you have broken your vow a hundred times. Come, come again, come." What a reassuring message. Today is a new day. It doesn't matter what has happened in the past. No need to despair. Start this day as a new day with everything before you and nothing behind you. Isn't that reassuring? We can recommit to be more vigilant in our practice every day. We need not get discouraged if our practice has been inconsistent. We can just start again when the motivation is strong and we are ready.

In each moment, we are making a choice for love or fear. Which we choose reflects what we want to see. We can't choose two worlds at once as they are mutually exclusive. **"You cannot see both worlds, for each of them involves a different kind of seeing, and depends on what you cherish. The sight of one is possible because you have denied the other. Both are not true, yet either one will seem as real to you as the amount to which you hold it dear."** (T.13.VII.2.2-4) (ACIM OE T.12.VII.60)

When we get focused on the things we think we want in this world, or when we hold grievances and react with anger instead of forgiveness, we stay invested in the world of the ego. **"You do not really want the world you see, for it has disappointed you since time began."** (T.13.VII.3.1) (ACIM OE T.12.VII.61) When we choose the ego as our guide to seeing, we recognize ". . . **although you turn in sadness from it, you cannot find in it the road that leads away from it into another world."** (T.13.VII.3.7)(ACIM OE T.12.VII.61) **"Real choice is no illusion. But the world has none to offer. All its roads but lead to disappointment, nothingness and death. There is no choice in its alternatives. Seek not escape from problems here. The world was made that problems could not be escaped. Be not deceived by all the different names its roads are given. They have but one end."** (T-31.IV.2:1-8)

The only way we can know ourselves as we were created, beautiful and holy, is through forgiveness. How willing are you to forgive in the face of seeming attack, anger, disagreement, perceived problems, and distress? That is where the mind training comes in. When we hold onto grievances and attachments to the world, we block the love that we are from our awareness. In other words, we don't know ourselves. Our joy and happiness are covered over with our dark thoughts. In every moment, the Holy Spirit is there, shining His radiance on us, but we are actively choosing against it by holding attack thoughts. To do so is an act of self-hatred. It is a clear case of not knowing our own best interests. Although we are very familiar with this concept by now,

our constant vigilance is still called for. It is still a challenge for us because of our attachment to the separate self. This is where the resistance comes in, but **"Love always answers, being unable to deny a call for help, or not to hear the cries of pain that rise to it from every part of this strange world you made but do not want."** (T.13.VII.4.3) (ACIM OE T.12.VII.62) It simply waits on our welcome. Our only need is to wake up to who we really are.

The things of this world seem so real, and the experiences we have seem so painful. We have all experienced sadness, sorrow, loss, disappointment and yes, exhilaration and pleasure. **"Heaven remains your one alternative to this strange world you made and all its ways; its shifting patterns and uncertain goals, its painful pleasures and its tragic joys. God made no contradictions. What denies its own existence and attacks itself is not of Him."** (ACIM, W-131.7:1-3)

None of it lasts. Everything passes. There is no lasting love in this world of time because, by the very nature of time, all things will end, as nothing here endures forever, including our bodies. It is a world of instability and loss. A very good movie, which takes us on a journey of all things ending in loss and finally death, is called *The Stone Angel*. It demonstrates how there is nothing we can hold onto in this world, even though we still cling to the possibility that there is something of value here. We hold out hope that there is something we might still gain.

To be free of the experience of suffering, we must constantly maintain vigilance and willingness to have the blocks to light be released so we can glimpse love's presence in our minds, more and more consistently. **"Under His guidance you will travel light and journey lightly, for His sight is ever on the journey's end, which is His goal. God's Son is not a traveller through outer worlds. However holy his perception may become, no world outside himself holds his inheritance. Within himself he has no needs, for light needs nothing but to shine in peace, and from itself to let the rays extend in quiet to infinity."** (T.13.VII.13.4-7) (ACIM OE T.12.VII.71) Thus, we come to know a love that endures forever and a world where hate and vengeance have no meaning.

The world we strive to experience is the real world. In Chapter 30, Section V, the real world is described as a state of mind we experience when we release the guilt in our minds through forgiveness. The real world takes the place of all the idols of this world. There is no more holding dear our special wants and perceived needs. It is important to ask in everything, "What is it for?" Is it for keeping me invested in the illusion or for healing the mind and awakening from the dream? It is important to question our purpose in everything we do. When the real world is experienced, there will be no desire to leave this state of mind. Chapter 17 offers us a beautiful picture of the real world, which is bright and clean and new, with everything sparkling under the open sun. **"Nothing is hidden here, for everything has been forgiven and there are no fantasies to hide the truth."** (T.17.II.2.3) (ACIM OE T.17.III.8) This is what is experienced in the mind when our attachment to this illusory world is released.

While we continue to believe that there is still something of value in this world of illusion, we will not connect with the place in us where we experience a wonderful, open, and loving heart, full of kindness, totally pure, and innocent, shining in acceptance of all. When we connect with the beauty within, we radiate purity and joy, which is compelling, soft, yielding, and welcoming. Yet it is impossible to see two worlds. Until we make a total commitment to truth, we stay divided, hoping to get the best of both the illusory world and the world of spiritual gifts. In other words, we seek for the real world while still looking for perceived benefits in the dream. We try to bring spirituality into the illusion so we can hold onto both our illusory dream and God's peace, but this

is clearly impossible. We must let go of the ego, if only for an instant, in order to experience a glimpse of the truth. It is an inner shift. It is a change of mind.

Truth and illusion are mutually exclusive. The world is made by fear, and everything we see in it is a projection of the guilt in the mind. Jesus says that we cherish guilt, hug it close, shelter it, and look to it for ". . . **its loving protection and alert defense.**" (Psychotherapy Pamphlet.2.VI.1.3) **"Healing occurs as a patient begins to hear the dirge he sings, and questions its validity."** (P.VI.1.5) We don't shun guilt but embrace it. The first obstacle to peace is the attraction to guilt: **"The attraction of guilt produces fear of love, for love would never look on guilt at all."** (T.19.IV.A.i.10.1) (ACIM OE T.19.V.a.49) We may wonder why we would be attracted to guilt. This attraction is our investment in our body, our personality, and our individuality. As long as we want this separate self, we will be attracted to guilt, but healing occurs as we start to listen to our thoughts, notice our judgments and our attachments, and question their validity. As Jon Marc Hammer (Jayem), author of *The Way of Mastery*, says in his blog, "It is a journey of reclaiming all the territory once made to keep light out, now given over completely to serving the incarnation of light. This light must be brought to every nook and cranny of life." The light is our awareness. Our part is to identify the beliefs we hold in the mind as the cause of our distress, and once seen, we need to be willing to let them go. Jesus says, **"The first two steps in this process require your cooperation. The final one does not. Your images have been replaced. By taking the first two steps, you will see that this is so."** (W.23.5.3-6) Our part is actually very small but takes great courage, willingness, and honesty. The Holy Spirit in the right mind does all the heavy lifting shining away whatever we bring to Him.

As we learned early in the Course, **"Nothing I see in this room means anything."** (W.1) Then we go on to recognize, **"I have given everything I see all in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place] the meaning that it has for me."** (W.2) Now we must question the meaning we have given everything we see. All our interpretations and understandings are false. It is a time of sorting out the false from the true and the ephemeral from the eternal. God's strength is what helps us make this choice. Our fantasy is that there is still something that the sensory world has to offer on behalf of our happiness. This is what we need help with in order to loosen the world from all we thought it was. Thus, it is our task to seek and find within ourselves the obstacles to the love we are. They are all the fearful and self-attacking thoughts. We all hold a definition of ourselves that includes our preferences and judgments, our values and beliefs, and all the concepts we hold that define us in this dream. Yet Jesus tells us that none of these concepts define us. All they do is tell us who we are not. They constitute our false self—the character in the dream. Thus, we are called to release all concepts so who we truly are can shine through. It is a process of loosening ourselves from our rigid investment in the beliefs that we now hold.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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