



LESSON 154 I am among the ministers of God.

Sarah's Commentary:

Our function in this world is to forgive. Regardless of our role in the world, the content is always the same. It is to accept Correction of our misperceptions. Then, and only then, can we extend the message that the separation never happened in reality, and God's Son is guiltless. This is what we demonstrate as ministers of God. It is living by example. It is through giving that we can know ourselves, as we were created. **"For you will not see the light, until you offer it to all your brothers."** (W.153.11.5) This is what our purpose is. Certainly, we can choose to waste time in distractions, but when we do, Jesus tells us time wastes us. Time is here only for the purpose of healing ourselves. **"For as we prove that we accept no will we do not share, our many gifts from our Creator will spring to our sight and leap into our hands, and we will recognize what we received."** (W.154.14.4) It is a demonstration to our brothers and sisters that the ego has no power to take our peace and our joy, which is changeless and eternal and is present in everyone we meet.

What really struck me today when I read this lesson was that any attempt to judge ourselves is an attempt **"to hold decision off, and to delay commitment to our function."** (W.154.1.4) It is a very common fallacy to believe that we are not sufficiently spiritually advanced to undertake our function in the world. Thus, we are called not to be either arrogant or falsely humble. We are under the delusion that we can judge our own readiness. This struck me because it was my excuse for delaying facilitating gatherings and workshops in our community. I did not feel ready and, by my own assessment, I still feel I have a lot more work to do in healing my mind. I was also comparing myself with others who seemed so much more advanced. Jesus tells us that while this may look like humility, it is actually arrogance because we are listening to the ego. The ego is diminishing who we really are and what we have to offer to the world. **"There is no one from whom a teacher of God cannot learn, so there is no one whom he cannot teach."** (Manual for Teachers.3.1.3)

We do not deliver our own message. **"A messenger is not the one who writes the message he delivers. Nor does he question the right of him who does, nor ask why he has chosen those who will receive the message that he brings. It is enough that he accept it, give it to the ones for whom it is intended, and fulfill his role in its delivery. If he determines what the messages should be, or what their purpose is, or where they should be carried, he is failing to perform his proper part as bringer of the Word."** (W.154.5.1-4) We are not the ones who decide if the message is appropriate or not. We only become a channel for His message. The content of the message is always one that reflects God's Love in this world.

Our appointed role **"was selected by the Voice for God,"** (W.154.2.1) meaning we simply follow the guidance and not look to the ego for confirmation. It is not our own message, but it is through

Him that we have the strength to understand what it entails and to **"succeed in everything you do that is related to it."** (W.154.3.2)

Jesus advises us not to put ourselves in charge of our journey of awakening, for we cannot judge our own progress. In fact, he says, **"Put yourself not in charge of this, for you cannot distinguish between advance and retreat. Some of your greatest advances you have judged as failures, and some of your deepest retreats you have evaluated as success."** (T.18.V.1.5-6) (ACIM OE.T.18.VI.41) Jesus is telling us that we can't figure any of this out for ourselves, because **"what we think is weakness can be strength, what we believe to be our strength is often arrogance."** (W.154.1.7) We just don't have the information we need by which to judge.

The Holy Spirit knows us because His Presence is part of us in our right minds. **"Seeing your strengths exactly as they are, and equally aware of where they can be best applied, for what, to whom and when, He chooses and accepts your part for you."** (W.154.2.2) We merely follow His lead and His guidance. It is about placing our lives in His hands and letting Him take charge of everything. This requires submission and surrender of our own plans, our own way, and our own need for specialness. We turn to Him because, on our own, we do not know, and we can't judge. There is no way we can understand where we are in this journey. Our judgments are always based on very limited data.

I have spent a lifetime learning to be independent and taking pride in managing my own life. Surrendering and submitting to authority has not come easily. I continue to struggle with the authority issue, but I have learned how much joy and relaxation comes from knowing I can stop trying to do this on my own. When we see how much peace, joy, and success come from surrendering our way to One who knows, we become more motivated to give up our way. It requires that we turn away from the voice of the ego and learn to be still and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. It comes as a result of our dedication and commitment to the practices laid out in these lessons. It does take effort.

"When the ego was made, God placed in the mind the Call to joy. This Call is so strong that the ego always dissolves at Its sound. That is why you must choose to hear one of two voices within you. One you made yourself, and that one is not of God. But the other is given you by God, Who asks you only listen to it. The Holy Spirit is in you in a very literal sense. His is the Voice that calls you back to where you were before and will be again. It is possible even in this world to hear only that Voice and no other. It takes effort and great willingness to learn." (T.5.II.3.2-10) (ACIM OE T.5.III.19) (ACIM OE.T.5.IV.20)

"The Holy Spirit is your Guide in choosing. He is in the part of your mind that always speaks for the right choice, because He speaks for God. He is your remaining communication with God, which you can interrupt but cannot destroy." (T.5.II.8.1-3) (ACIM OE T.5.IV.25) As we connect with this Voice, we are led to be where we are to be, to whom to speak, and what to say. We become the messenger, as we are given the messages. We don't make up the messages. We learn to turn within and ask for guidance in everything we are to say and do. Our function is to see the innocence in our brothers. It requires that we see past their behaviors to the truth in them so we can know our own innocence. We carry the message to those who are part of our lives, to those we are to meet, and even to those we think about. **"The curriculum is highly individualized, and all aspects are under the Holy Spirit's particular care and guidance."** (M.29.2.6)

"The messages that they deliver are intended first for them." (W.154.6.2) In other words, we first receive in order to give, but we don't fully get the message until we give it. If I want to know I am forgiven, I must forgive. We are therefore giving what we have first accepted for ourselves. It is not about anything in form but only about the content of love, which is demonstrated by accepting the Atonement for ourselves. It is never about particular words or behavior, but we demonstrate we are no longer invested in judgment. **"The messengers of God perform their part by their acceptance of His messages as for themselves, and show they understand the messages by giving them away."** (W.154.7.2) Thus, our understanding is reinforced as we demonstrate it. We are to be constantly looking for His direction, rather than choosing our own way. **"They choose no roles that are not given them by His authority."** (W.154.7.3)

Why wait? Jesus tells us, **"You are appointed now."** (W.154.8.3) We are called to exemplify what we have learned. We do so by communicating that we are the same, we share one Self, and we are all God's One Son, completely forgiven. It requires that we accept this for ourselves and extend it to all so we can know this for ourselves. **"No one can receive and understand he has received until he gives."** (W.154.8.6)

He is telling us, **"You have heard this said a hundred ways, a hundred times, and yet belief is lacking still."** (W.154.12.2) All of God's gifts are already ours. Jesus tells us, **"you will receive a thousand miracles and then receive a thousand more"** (W.154.12.3) and many blessings, but they go unnoticed until we are prepared to see them. Behind this illusion, behind all of our problems, behind our specialness and our judgments are miracles waiting to be received. If we are to become the reflection of God's Love in this dream, it means the dark shadow of the ego must be released. The cost of holding onto its thought system is that all of the gifts of God will go unnoticed, though they are always there, awaiting our acceptance. We have the Love of God and we are the Love of God. It is all within us now.

This ministry Jesus is talking about is certainly not about preaching, proselytizing, or trying to change anyone. It is only about healing our own minds so we can be a reflection of His Love in the world. **"We practice giving Him what He would have, that we may recognize His gifts to us."** (W.154.11.1) It is all about accepting forgiveness and offering it.

The body, which was made as a symbol of attack, can now be used for a holy purpose. The body, which was made to limit love, can now express a different message through our voice, our hands, our feet, and our will united with His own so **"that those who wait in misery may at last be delivered."** (W.154.11.4) **"And He needs our will united with His Own, that we may be the true receivers of the gifts He gives."** (W.154.11.5) He can now work through us in everything we do, everywhere we go, and all those we meet and are yet to meet. The gifts we give are always for ourselves.

Early this week, I met with my accountant, who was doing my tax return. He works out of his home and has a ten-year-old daughter. She confided in me that she had a big problem with some girls at school who are mean to her. I was able to let her know, in a very simple way, about the opportunity available to her in this situation to learn about her own strength in the midst of the challenges they were presenting to her. I explained the call for love coming from these girls who were torturing her. I explained to her how our minds are joined and when she chooses to see the situation from their perspective, she will be able to release her fear and send them blessings instead. I explained to her that whatever was held in her mind about them would be received by their minds. I invited her to consider how unhappy they must be to attack anyone. Finally, I suggested she pay special attention to their response as she, herself, looks at them differently.

Today, I got a card in the mail from her saying, "Sarah, it worked!! I send them blessings all the time now. I want to thank you for helping me with this problem." I am among the ministers of God and I don't know when, how, or who will be there on my path, at any moment, ready to hear the message being given me through Him. I don't know what to say or do, but He does. I don't know the impact of my message, but He does. It is all a fascinating journey. I thought I was just going there to pick up my tax return! We never know why we are in whatever situation we find ourselves. What I have discovered is that **"There are no accidents in salvation. Those who are to meet will meet, because together they have the potential for a holy relationship. They are ready for each other."** (M.3.1.6-8)

I attended a wedding of a friend at the MacDonald Hotel recently and again had a lot of trepidation about dressing up, making small talk, and wondering how soon I could leave. Then, just when we were ready to exit, we were introduced to a couple who shared a struggle they were having in their lives. It was another perfect opportunity for a holy encounter where there was a message to be delivered that all is forgiven and everyone is innocent. Again, it was a reminder that we really can't judge what anything is for. Shortly thereafter, I received an email from a gal who had visited our home briefly on two occasions. She wrote to say she wondered if we even remembered her after such a long time. As a result of our meeting, a couple of years ago, she had been prompted to find her spiritual path and asked if we could help make some connections for her. She indicated that prior to our meeting, she had an aversion to anything to do with God. Who would have thought?!

What do we know about who is seemingly put on our path and why? We all have these encounters, but we don't always get the feedback, and we don't need to. We don't need to know what the outcome of these encounters will be. We are only to follow our prompts and go where we are nudged to be. The only "agenda" for these encounters is the healing of our own minds. As Jesus reminds us, **"It is not the function of God's teachers to evaluate the outcome of their gifts. It is merely their function to give them."** (M.6.3.1-2) In the Psychotherapy Pamphlet, we read, **"Perhaps the answer does not seem to be a gift from Heaven. It may even seem to be a worsening and not a help. Yet let the outcome not be judged by us."** (P.2.V.6.8-10)

None of this is a personal mission to reflect our own specialness. In fact, it is our specialness, our self-interest, and our belief we know anything that must be surrendered if we are to be His messenger. Everything in this world becomes a classroom for undoing our false perceptions. Every special relationship is part of this classroom and is there for the purpose of healing of our own minds. **"A teacher of God is anyone who chooses to be one. His qualifications consist solely in this; somehow, somewhere he has made a deliberate choice in which he did not see his interests as apart from someone else's. Once he has done that, his road is established and his direction is sure. A light has entered the darkness. It may be a single light, but that is enough. He has entered an agreement with God even if he does not yet believe in Him. He has become a bringer of salvation. He has become a teacher of God."** (M.1.1-8)

There is an interesting story of Helen, the scribe for the Course, helping a young woman who was petrified of flying. In helping this woman, she heard the inner voice tell her, "This is really my church." In other words, the church is in our relationship with our brothers.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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