



LESSON 184

The Name of God is my inheritance.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson helps us understand how we developed our perception by seeing separate things and giving them all names. This keeps us from seeing the whole of reality and keeps us from seeing with vision, which in turn keeps us from seeing who someone really is. It is not just a name connected to a body. What this naming process does is it shuts out wholeness. We see things we have named as surrounded by space that makes everything seem separate from everything else. We have also done the same thing with ourselves. We believe in our unique attributes, our independent will, and our separate self as contained by a body and holding private thoughts. This is contrary to truth which is unified. It does not acknowledge separate things. Once we have given all these seemingly separate things names, we give them reality as well. **"For what is named is given meaning and will then be seen as meaningful; a cause of true effect, with consequence inherent in itself."** (W.184.3.4) What we give a name has been given importance by the very nature of our naming it.

Yesterday, the Lesson concluded that God has no name so there cannot be separation but only perfect unity. We believe we have shattered this perfect unity and now there are forms and shapes instead of Oneness. Each form and shape has been given a name. The whole point of naming everything is so we would see all those forms, including separate bodies, as real. Now we have come to believe that what the names point to is real and we all agree this is so. This is what the world offers and we agree with what it bestows, accepting **". . . the signs and symbols that assert the world is real."** (W.184.6.2) Those signs and symbols represent everything that reinforces our belief in separation, including pain, sickness, wars, problems, specialness, and finally death. We do not doubt that what is named is there.

We are so certain what we see is actually there which is the purpose of our senses. We have given meaning to everything we see. This takes us right back to Lesson 1. **"Nothing I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place] means anything."** (W.1) None of it has any meaning except the meaning we give it. Jesus understands that to question it at all seems crazy, yet it is what he asks us to do. **"To question it is madness; to accept its presence is the proof of sanity."** (W.184.6.7) To be well adjusted to the world seems perfectly sane to us. It seems like insanity not to accept the reality of this world, so we become part of it. The agreement we all hold, in the reality of the world is powerful. The world's religions confirm that God is the Creator of this world and this, too, makes it real in the minds of most. Jesus tells us that just because there is agreement by most does not make it so.

What learning means in the world is to **". . . teach the mind a thousand alien names, and thousands more."** (W.184.5.2) Jesus says this is hard to do, but we have accomplished it. He says it is difficult to teach an abstract mind so many concrete symbols. **"What you have taught yourself is such a giant learning feat it is indeed incredible."** (T.31.I.2.7) (ACIM OE T.31.I.2) He challenges our belief that learning this Course is difficult when, in fact, we have accomplished the most difficult learning feat of all. We have taught ourselves we are something we are not.

"No one who understands what you have learned, how carefully you learned it, and the pains to which you went to practice and repeat the lessons endlessly, in every form you could conceive of them, could ever doubt the power of your learning skill. There is no greater power in the world. The world was made by it, and even now depends on nothing else. The lessons you have taught yourself have been so overlearned and fixed they rise like heavy curtains to obscure the simple and the obvious. Say not you cannot learn them. For your power to learn is strong enough to teach you that your will is not your own, your thoughts do not belong to you, and even you are someone else." (T.31.I.3.1-6) (ACIM OE T.31.I.3)

At some point, we start to question what we have learned, and the beginning of this questioning motivates us to search for the deeper meaning of our lives. We start to wonder why we are here, and what our purpose is. We tell ourselves that there must be a better way of being in the world. Jesus tells us, **"In its proper place, it serves but as a starting point from which another kind of learning can begin, a new perception can be gained, and all the arbitrary names the world bestows can be withdrawn as they are raised to doubt."** (W.184.7.5) In other words, the world can now become a place for learning **"a new perception,"** or another way to see everything. The world becomes a backdrop for finding a new way of seeing everything by turning to the Guide within. Everything in the world can provide us with an opportunity to release our way of seeing.

Just because the symbols of the world do not reflect God's reality, it does not mean we stop using them. **"You have need to use the symbols of the world a while. But be you not deceived by them as well."** (W.184.9.2-3) We still think that we live in this world, and we think that we relate to other bodies. But we are now learning another way of relating. Instead of defining our brothers by their bodies and personalities, we ask for help to see the love beyond the forms. With help from the Holy Spirit we are increasingly released from the symbols of this world so that instead of separation, we experience joining. The symbols are now being used to reflect God's love, instead of for maintaining separation. **"Thus what you need are intervals each day in which the learning of the world becomes a transitory phase; a prison house from which you go into the sunlight and forget the darkness."** (W.184.10.1) In the holy instant, we escape the symbols temporarily and have an experience of the formless. This is a reflection of God's Oneness.

When you step back from the experience of the holy instant into the world of darkness, it is **". . . not because you think it real, but only to proclaim its unreality in terms which still have meaning in the world that darkness rules."** (W.184.10.3) Thus, we still use the signs and symbols of this world, but for a different purpose. The world is now just a backdrop for the healing of the mind. **"You walk this path as others walk, nor do you seem to be distinct from them, although you are indeed. Thus can you serve them while you serve yourself, and set their footsteps on the way that God has opened up to you, and them through you."** (W.155.5.3)

In other words, we do not escape the world, but live in it as others do while holding a different mindset. We do not need to quit our jobs or leave our families. We do not need to go to ashrams, though there may indeed be changes in our lifestyles and situations. Regardless of where we are, **"There is a way of living in the world that is not here, although it seems to be."** (W.155.1.1) Jesus says that those who are like us will recognize us. While we function in the world and work with the symbols of this world, our purpose is one of waking up from this dream through our relationships with everything and everyone in the world. Now we are willing to look at everything from a new perspective. We no longer take the world's perspective but instead see everything in a new light. It is the recognition we are all the same. We have the same ego, with all the same attributes, and the same Christ Self.

Jesus teaches us how to live in the world while recognizing this is not our true reality. Yet while this world is an illusion, we have a function here, which is to forgive. This requires watching our thoughts and being willing to be shown that there is another way to see everything. What seems like an attack is really a call for love. What we have used to support our specialness can now be used for the purpose of undoing. Instead of listening to the counsel of the ego, we now turn to the Guide within as to what to do, where to go, and how to perceive every situation. He helps us to see everything we experience is not what it seems. We turn to the Holy Spirit, asking for help to see everything in a new way. We acknowledge that the way we think about any situation keeps us from the love we are and from our inheritance of joy and peace so we must be willing to admit we are wrong about everything we think we know.

"The ego always speaks first." (T.6.IV.1.2) (ACIM OE T.6.V.45) The Holy Spirit is the Correction of the ego's version of everything. Some time ago, I experienced distress that my partner, who made a commitment to be home at a certain time, did not show up and did not call. It was particularly difficult because that same day I received a call from the hospital that my mother was being discharged, and I would have to pick her up. Managing this by myself seemed challenging and trying to connect with my partner on the cell phone was not successful. Needless to say, the ego spoke loudly about betrayal and injustice, which gave me justification to hold a grievance. I reminded myself that a healed mind would not react as I was reacting. So what was the basis for my grievance? When I inquired more deeply I realized that I felt alone, helpless, and unloved and I recognized that none of this was the truth. It was all based on beliefs I was holding in the mind. So, I turned to the Holy Spirit for help in forgiving myself for using this situation to keep me from my peace and happiness. I realized that I did not want to give the situation the power to disrupt my peace. I was willing to be wrong about my belief in aloneness, helplessness, and that I was separate from love. I asked for help to see it all differently. While the ego was persistent in its version of things, ultimately a measure of peace prevailed. I realized that I could make a choice for peace. I was motivated and willing to turn my version of events over to the Holy Spirit for His interpretation.

Throughout the Course, Jesus reminds us that we made this world, yet here he says, **"Think not you made the world. Illusions yes! But what is true in earth and Heaven is beyond your naming."** (W.184.8.1-3) The real world is a reflection of reality. In other words, it is a reflection of Heaven. The real world is a state of true perception, which is still an illusion, but a helpful illusion much like forgiveness.

With each Lesson in Part I of this Workbook, false perception is being undone so we can learn we have been wrong about everything. **"And we are glad and thankful we were wrong."** (W.184.15.4) We increasingly recognize that everything we have taught ourselves is wrong. As we become more and more willing to surrender what we think we know, we become more willing to be taught by one who does know. Now we ask to be shown the truth. We become willing to look honestly at our blocks to love, bring them to awareness, and give them over to the Holy Spirit to be shined away. Throughout the day, stay aware of how you use differences as a weapon against others. Commit to taking **"intervals each day in which the learning of the world becomes a transitory phase; a prison house from which you go into the sunlight and forget the darkness,"** (W.184.10.1) if only for a moment, until the time of peace is extended more and more.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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