

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 207 ~ Review VI

[187] I bless the world because I bless myself.

Sarah's Commentary:

The prayer in this Lesson says, **"God's blessing shines upon me from within my heart, where He abides."** (W.207.1.2) If God's blessing shines from within my heart, nothing in this world of form needs to change for me to experience God's blessing. It is there within me all the time. Nothing needs to be different in the world for me to know I am blessed. Anything I expect, think I want, or need, is not where the blessing comes from. It is already within me. We think it is about getting something we want, but the ego is all about seeking and never finding. Until we realize that nothing outside of us can bring happiness, we will not give up the search and will blame conditions and situations for our lack of peace.

In Chapter 18.1, **"The Substitute Reality,"** (T.18.I) (ACIM T.18. I.IN) we learn that because of our fear of God (Love) and the truth of our reality, we have substituted the dream or the illusion for the truth of what we are. There is only this one substitution, but it has taken many forms. It is just the one error where we chose to separate from the love we are. Everything we see in this world of form, including our belief in time, space, and death, is all a result of that one error. This is how our world of unreality emerged, where we no longer see beyond it to the eternal truth. The truth, like the sun behind the clouds, is always shining. It is always there behind the seemingly thick veil of illusion. The veil actually has no substance at all, but we believe it is literally impenetrable because our senses bring us evidence to prove that what we see and experience is real.

The knowledge of Heaven seems to be shattered into billions of bits of perception, no longer one whole but all disconnected. We look out at this world and see all the forms instead of what is behind the veil, which is our reality. All our thoughts are projected onto this veil. What we see are just images, held in our minds and projected onto the screen. We think these images are real, yet they have no substance. The only thing real is our eternal, unlimited Self. When we look at our projections honestly, without defending them or justifying them, we can bring them to the healing light of the Holy Spirit. Defending our misperceptions keeps them in the dark, and they become our conditioned responses to everything we see. Our reactions are based on our interpretations, but they have no substance. We are called to look at our reactions and recognize that we have another choice. When we look at the workings of the ego mind, we can choose against it. We can turn to the Holy Spirit and ask for His interpretation of every situation we encounter. His interpretation will always be some form of the idea---God's Son is innocent.

The process of forgiveness requires that we stay very attentive to our thoughts and feelings and take full responsibility for them. This calls for consistent mind watching. In Chapter 30, **"Rules for Decision,"** (T.30.I) (ACIM OE T.30.II) Jesus provides us with a restorative for the times when we are not feeling peace. We start by admitting, **"At least I can decide I do not like what I feel now."** (T.30.I.8.2) (ACIM OE T.30.II.16) This paves the way for an opening to the

truth, **"And so I hope I have been wrong."** (T.30.I.9.2) (ACIM OE T.30.II.19) Now space is opened up in our minds, as we are willing to be shown another way. We open to the possibility that perhaps there might be another way to perceive a situation or event in our lives that has upset or disturbed us. Instead of insisting that I am right and making a case for my way of perceiving, I have now made room for another way to see the person or situation.

Do I want to be right if it only brings me pain, or would I rather change my mind and be happy? What can I lose by trying another way? I want another way to look at this because I want to feel peaceful. Thus, I open my mind to receive help from the Holy Spirit. I become willing to be taught another way. The ego will certainly create resistance, but happiness is now a bigger motivator for me than insisting that I am right. I have experienced the contrast that comes from stubbornly holding onto my perspective, versus releasing it to the Holy Spirit. My way brings more pain, distress, loneliness, and separation while choosing to forgive brings peace. Would you rather be right about the way you have set things up or be happy?

"And turn you to the stately calm within, where in holy stillness dwells the living God you never left, and Who never left you." (T.18.I.8.2) (ACIM OE T.18.II.8) We will never find this stately calm in the world. Only in the stillness within will we connect to the unlimited Self we are. As we read in **"The Real Alternative,"** (T.31.IV) (ACIM T.31.IV) we have taken many roads to nowhere. Jesus says, **"There is a tendency to think the world can offer consolation and escape from problems that its purpose is to keep. Why should this be? Because it is a place where choice among illusions seems to be the only choice."** (T.31.IV.1.1-3) (ACIM OE T.31.IV.33) This will take us nowhere until we take the only road that will lead us out.

Jesus says, **"Real choice is no illusion."** (T.31.IV.2.1) (ACIM OE T.31.IV.34) He says the time will come when all of us will see this. He encourages us to **"Learn now, without despair, there is no hope of answer in the world."** (T.31.IV.4.3) (ACIM OE T.31.IV.36) When we go within, we see it is where the blessing shines forth. We learn indeed, **"There is no road that leads away from Him. A journey from yourself does not exist."** (T.31.IV.10.4-5) (ACIM T.31.IV.42) This is such good news. We cannot be what we are not. Yes, we can experience a self that seems to live in this world, still hoping to find answers here, but when we lose hope of ever finding it where it does not exist, we turn within where truth abides. As we accept the blessing from within, we are able to give it; and as we give it, we know it is in us to give.

Today, we set our intention for peace. In the quiet of our hearts, we open up to the blessing within the mind. This requires releasing the blocks to love. What are these blocks? They constitute the false self that includes the body, personality and the image of ourselves we hold onto in this dream. We are learning to see the thoughts held in the mind, without taking them personally. Instead of judging ourselves for them, we can remember to laugh. We don't need to believe whatever we are thinking. For example, if I am annoyed at someone, or think someone should do a task a certain way, I can simply remember that I don't know anything. What I think needs to happen is just my idea, based on past conditioning and not the truth. I cannot judge that what they do is wrong. Allow whatever feelings come up around an issue without judging yourself for them. Thus, I can feel anger, guilt, sadness, or distress come up in me and allow it to come without trying to stuff it down because "spiritual people" are not supposed to feel this way. Stuffing down our feelings will not allow healing. We need to allow these feelings to arise so we can see them, which does not mean we should act on them. If we are afraid of our hateful feelings, we will not let them come up. When they are not allowed to be seen, we will not experience their release. The pure, innocent, magnificent, beautiful, eternal Self is always there behind these feelings.

When the blocks to the experience of the eternal Self are healed, we bring blessings instead of judgment to our day. And when blessings extend through us, we know that they are in us. Giving and receiving are one in Truth. When I accept the truth for myself, I accept it for everyone because we are One. This place where we are joined is a holy and blessed place. All the lilies of forgiveness and blessings are laid on this holy altar and include what we have given and what has been given to us. Every loving thought is right there. Every gift we have given is laid on that altar.

I hold very dear the words from Lesson 161, **"Give me your blessing, holy Son of God. I would behold you with the eyes of Christ, and see my perfect sinlessness in you."** (W.161.11.7-8) We ask this of our brother so that he may set us free. **"Behold him now, whom you have seen as merely flesh and bone, and recognize that Christ has come to you."** (W.161.12.3) This is so powerful when we apply it to our brothers. Whenever I am having difficulty with anyone, I try to remember this blessing so I can know my own perfect innocence. When I wish something were different in my relationship with my brother, I cannot be in the flow of acceptance of what is. I have decided to be annoyed instead, and in that decision, I choose the experience of the illusion and all the suffering that accompanies it.

Think of someone you resent, are angry with, would rather not see, or are judging and know that in releasing your grievances to the Holy Spirit, you are set free. **"I bless the world because I bless myself."** (W.187) **"Only my condemnation injures me."** (W.198) In other words, I am only hurt by the hurt I inflict on others. Nothing real is happening. It is only our own attacks, which are also illusory, coming back to "bite us."

In every sorrow I experience, I just need to turn to God, and my sorrows melt away. When we turn outward to find comfort in the world, we are turning away from the Source of comfort, and thus we keep our sorrows. So, today in our meditation, we affirm, **"I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me. I bless the world because I bless myself. God's blessing shines upon me from within my heart, where He abides. I need but turn to Him, and every sorrow melts away, as I accept His boundless love for me."** (W.207.1.1-3) Then, in our meditation time, we withdraw our attention from the outward events and situations that bring sorrow, and we move our attention to the center of our being where God's blessing shines from within the heart where He abides. We enter that place of boundless love and bring all sorrow to the Light to be dispelled.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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