

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 213 ~ Review VI

[193] All things are lessons God would have me learn.

Sarah's Commentary:

The focus of this entire Review is on removing the blocks to the awareness of who we are as eternal beings created by God. **"I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me."** (W.213) Nothing we think, nothing we have said or done, has changed the truth of what we are, but we need to experience this for ourselves. We think what our senses report back to us is what is real. As long as we focus on what our senses show us and believe in the reality of this world, the real world seems distant and illusory.

The small self we identify with and call by a name is not our reality. We think our reality is that of a body and personality, with specific values and concepts that we hold. We believe we were born into this world, which is all that is real. Yet we are learning that this is all a projection of our belief in sin, guilt, and fear from a mind that has become confused. This confusion arose with the decision to align with the belief system of the ego; but, just because we have come to believe the ego story that we sinned and God will now punish us, it does not make it true.

We can change our minds. It is all about choosing to do so. We can change our minds about what we have come to believe about ourselves and the world. There is another part of the mind of which we have been unaware, waiting for our acceptance. With a new understanding of how the ego set all this up, we can choose to let go of what is false. With every prayer, we loosen the mind from the interpretations of the ego and thus experience change. With each forgiving thought, a shift is made in the mind. Every time we ask to see a situation differently, we change. Every time we are tempted to be distressed but respond instead with the thought for the day, we change. All the changes come with willingness and dedication to commit our lives to waking up from this dream. When this is our only goal, we become determined to see everything in our lives as a perfect classroom for healing. Every time we take responsibility for our interpretations of every situation and assume accountability for our responses, we change; and with these changes, all the blocks to the awareness of the presence of love fall away, until we come to recognize the changeless Self.

Today, we are reminded that the way we remember our true Self is by recognizing that there is an opportunity for a miracle in all that seems to happen to us in the script we have chosen. It has all happened already. The outside circumstances don't matter. All that matters is how we see them. Nothing has meaning except for the meaning we give it. It is all neutral. Whatever thought system we hold in our minds is either projected from the wrong mind or extended from the right mind onto every circumstance we encounter. All we are seeing are our own thoughts reflected back to us.

We know guilt does not feel at all wonderful, but what is wonderful is that as students of this Course, we can bring our thoughts of anger, hatred, and distress to awareness, which is the first step in forgiveness. As we are willing to take responsibility for these thoughts, we can turn them over to the Teacher in our minds (the Holy Spirit), Who can reinterpret our thoughts for us--- from our wrong-minded perspective to true perception. With His help, **"all that stood between your image of yourself and what you are, forgiveness washes joyfully away."** (T.30.V.6.2) (ACIM OE T.31.VI.62) We supply Him with the material for forgiveness, and he shows us how to see the situation in a new way, so we can experience a miracle instead of a grievance in each circumstance.

Imagine your partner leaves and the relationship is over. For me, this has been a time of great sadness, anger, and distress. It has brought a lot of suffering. Yet the only problem, as I reflect on this, has always been a lack of acceptance. Until we come to acceptance, there is a lot of suffering. No matter what happens in our lives, when we take the hand of our master teacher Jesus and turn to him for help, every situation that confronts us can become a beautiful, new lesson in forgiveness. When we resist the lesson, we suffer. It is why Jesus reminds us that we need to be a happy learner. What was a painful situation has become another opportunity to rediscover a deeper truth about ourselves.

The only requirement for this learning is not to run away from our feelings. In other words, we have to first be willing to give up our story about the situation and then acknowledge our murderous thoughts, our sadness, and our despair. We do not indulge them, deny them, or build an altar to them. The important thing is not to repress, deny, or project our feelings. Simply by looking at them without judgment, and remembering that there is another choice we can make, is how the mind gets transformed. Trust that the healing will happen when you willingly turn to the Holy Spirit and release to Him the feelings and beliefs you are holding onto in your mind. Instead of seeing a problem, we can recognize that this is a situation where the beliefs that we are separate from love, are on our own, and are in a state of lack can now be put on the inner altar and given over to the Holy Spirit.

All things truly are lessons God would have me learn, but none are given me by God. The curriculum is my own life experiences. My relationships provide me with every opportunity to undo the guilt and fear with the help of the Holy Spirit. Only then can I remember that I am an eternal being who has no reason for guilt and fear. It is all my own making. It is all about the thoughts I am believing. We have a choice to see it differently and to know there is another part of the mind where truth resides and always has been there. As Jesus reminds us, we do not have to strive for our magnitude because we already have it. **"All your striving must be directed against littleness, for it does require vigilance to protect your magnitude in this world."** (T.15.III.4.4) (ACIM OE T.15.IV.25)

This Lesson can be misinterpreted and often is. How is that done? Our way of thinking about this Lesson is that we have problems because we screwed up in some way and now have to learn to do it differently. For example, if my relationship fails, I try to look at what is my lesson in this situation. Was I too needy? Did I not give him adequate attention? Did I expect too much of him? How can I do it differently next time in order not to have my relationship fail? Or, if I get sick, I want to know what I can do differently so I don't get sick. And so it goes. We think it is some behavior we need to change so we will get a different result and not get hurt and betrayed again. We might ask, "How did I manifest this?" or we think we did something wrong and hurt someone

and now deserve to be punished. We think every trial and tribulation brings a different lesson, and we spend a lot of time trying to figure out what the lesson is. We put our own ego in charge to figure our way out of difficult situations.

Jesus has just one answer for us. He makes it simple. We don't need to waste any time analyzing the problem, the lesson, or what we failed to do right. Jesus says that in every trial and tribulation, no matter the form, the lesson is always the same---to forgive and turn to him, in trust and willingness, to heal. Therefore, every problem is just one more opportunity to learn this one lesson. All the things coming our way are there only to teach us one lesson: forgiveness. Every problem is the same in fundamental content because every situation teaches us the same thing **"Forgive, and you will see this differently."** (W.193.3.7) Why? We will see it differently because the content of all distress, regardless of the form it comes in, is our belief in sin and the guilt that accompanies it, which forgiveness dissolves. We think we have done something terribly wrong because we have bought into the ego story that indeed we have done wrong and should feel guilty. Now we fear punishment, and we get what we expect through problems and the painful situations that we experience. As we learn to forgive and heal, we learn to look beyond the apparent difficulty and see that it is not real. Our own painful thought system that we carry around keeps us in the ego game. With forgiveness, we are released from this state of imprisonment.

God sends us no painful lessons but, through the Holy Spirit, the memory of God is forever in our minds, given to free us from this painful thought system. Thus, the problem is in our own thoughts and the Answer is also in our own minds. There is nowhere else to look. Our part is to bring the problem to the Answer. In our practice, we are reminded that we have a choice and can bring all of our misperceptions to the truth. We remember to give over our thoughts, as we stay mindful of what is coming up for us throughout the day. **"This thought I do not want. I choose instead"** (W.RVI.IN.6.2-3) to forgive and I **"will see this differently."** (W.193.3.7)

"A lesson is a miracle which God offers to me, in place of thoughts I made that hurt me. What I learn of Him becomes the way I am set free. And so I choose to learn His lessons and forget my own." (W.213.1.2-4) If I wake up in the morning and I am upset, I have chosen separation. Now the lesson for me is to release my upset, so instead of choosing separation, I can choose the miracle offered me by God in place of the thoughts I am holding that are hurting me. This choice is consistently and constantly available to me. The power of decision is my own. **"Every decision you make is for Heaven or for hell, and brings you the awareness of what you decided for."** (T.15.III.5.7) (ACIM OE T.15.IV.27) Our part is to bring our misperceptions to the truth. The rest is done for us. It is a matter of trust. When you truly and willingly hand over your painful thoughts to the Holy Spirit, He will do the rest.

Everything we have taught ourselves hurts us. To be set free from our own thought system of guilt and the suffering it brings is the purpose of this practice.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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