



LESSON 224

God is my Father, and He loves His Son.

Sarah's Commentary:

These Lessons are now about waiting in quiet expectancy to enter into His presence. He has made an ancient promise to us and He intends to keep it. It is our decision whether we choose to have the experience of the holy instant. We go as quickly as our fear will allow. God will not override our will and we are not being hurled into the experience of Heaven.

We have developed an identity of a separate self. Our identity includes the body, our many traits and attributes, the beliefs and opinions we hold, and the self-concept we think defines us—all untrue. It is all held in the mind but can all be shifted when we accept the miracle. **"The miracle looks on devastation and reminds the mind that what it sees is false."** (Q.13.1.3) When our false perceptions are forgiven we experience a reflection of God's Love in this world.

Our identity is so lofty that it is beyond anything we can even imagine, but we can have an experience of Heaven reflected here. In the quiet of the mind where space is made for the miracle, we leave behind the concepts we hold of ourselves. We experience His Love, His gratitude, beneficence and beauty, innocence, and a deep sense of rest. Words cannot express the feeling of release from the grip of the ego. It is about letting go of the image we cling to and defend. With the image come judgments, comparisons, and differences, all contributing to our deep fatigue in trying to keep it all under control.

"The choice to judge rather than to know is the cause of the loss of peace." (T.3.VI.2.1) (ACIM OE T.3.VIII.61) **"When you feel tired, it is because you have judged yourself as capable of being tired. When you laugh at someone, it is because you have judged him as unworthy. When you laugh at yourself you must laugh at others, if only because you cannot tolerate the idea of being more unworthy than they are. All this makes you feel tired because it is essentially disheartening. You are not really capable of being tired, but you are very capable of wearying yourself. The strain of constant judgment is virtually intolerable. It is curious that an ability so debilitating would be so deeply cherished. Yet if you wish to be the author of reality, you will insist on holding on to judgment. You will also regard judgment with fear, believing that it will someday be used against you. This belief can exist only to the extent that you believe in the efficacy of judgment as a weapon of defense for your own authority."** (T.3.VI.5.1-10) (ACIM OE T.3.VIII.65)

The place where I think I am is not my home. My true home, my dwelling place, is with God. It is my reality. It is where I belong. No substitutes can satisfy the Son of God. All substitutes turn to ash as they offer us nothing. They only feel good for the moment. They are temporary pleasures that cannot serve the Son of God. When we choose to release them, without feeling sacrifice,

recognizing their lack of value, we are then ready to commit fully to awakening from this dream. Until we do, we are on both sides, experiencing moments of release and relaxation, and at other times, holding on tightly to the things of this world. We believe all will be released through death, but this is a false belief. We are released only when false beliefs are transformed.

Today, we remind ourselves of our reality. We give up our illusion of control because, on our own, we don't have a clue! We don't know who we are, where we are going, and what we are doing. ***"I do not know the thing I am, and therefore do not know what I am doing, where I am, or how to look upon the world or on myself."*** (T.31.V.17.7) (ACIM OE T.31.V.60) Jesus tells us, ***"There is no statement that the world is more afraid to hear than this"*** (T.31.V.17.6) (ACIM OE T.31.V.59) because we fear to lose what we think we are and what we have made of ourselves.

We have chosen to walk this path because we are tired, we are lost, and we are weary of trying to find peace and happiness where it does not exist. When we turn within, we experience glimpses of the truth. To listen to His Voice is to be reminded of our Identity. It is to hear the forgotten song, calling us back to where we never left. ***"Listen—perhaps you catch a hint of an ancient state not quite forgotten; dim, perhaps, and yet not altogether unfamiliar, like a song whose name is long forgotten, and the circumstances in which you heard completely unremembered."*** (T.21.I.6.1) (ACIM OE T.21II.8)

We continue to read ***"What is Forgiveness?"*** (W.PII.Q1) daily with each Lesson. Without forgiveness, we cannot know the truth about ourselves. Until our false ideas are released, we keep ourselves bound to our false identity. We maintain our judgments, which Jesus says we ***"will not raise to doubt"*** (W.PII.Q1.2.1), although they are not true. The distortions in our minds must be seen if they are to be released. When the mind is closed against the truth, we refuse to question our beliefs, and we refuse to look behind our defenses. We keep our thoughts away from reason and maintain our fixed positions. It is a defense against the truth. We are trying to protect what we have made from what has been given us by God.

When the ego demands that we protect and defend our perspectives and our positions, we can stop for a moment and choose instead to step back and ask for another interpretation from the Holy Spirit. When the temptation is there to react to any request, we can take a moment to go within and ask for guidance. When we want to make a point in an argument, we can instead take a moment to reflect whether anything needs to be said. When we get up in the morning, feeling upset, we can recognize we have chosen the ego, and we can do a restorative, as described in Chapter 30, Section I ***"Rules for Decision."*** (ACIM OE T.30.II) When we judge a brother, we can ask for help to release our ideas and ask for His interpretation of how to see our brother. Moment by moment, we are choosing Heaven or hell.

I was recently sharing about a difficult and painful event experienced by a friend. I described it as challenging and how it triggered a concern in me about her well-being. However, later she revealed she had not only moved on from this experience, but she described it as a wonderful gift. She had taken a journey through seeming crucifixion to an experience of resurrection, such that the painful event had actually taught her an important lesson and one she deeply valued. This was a beautiful demonstration for me that I don't know what anything is for and therefore can't judge a situation as good or bad. My thoughts and judgments about the situation were wrong. They were all in the past. All things are lessons God would have me learn.

Helen was given a message in October 1975 that I found particularly poignant and relevant to this Lesson. While it is rather long, I include it for you to contemplate because there is so much wisdom to ponder here on how we might go about our lives.

*Be comforted.
You are not asked to do anything.
There is a time when to step
back is all that is asked of you.
It is a time of rest and not of
strain; a time of peace and
not a time of conflict.
That time is almost here.
It seems fearful
because it is not under your control.
But think a minute; stop and
think honestly about what your control has done;
what it has brought to you.*

*You have been caught in a trap from which you never could escape.
Conflict, guilt, and fear have come with you and never left your side.
Each one of you has done this differently,
yet each has come to the same place;
the same impasse.
And now it seems to each of you that there is no escape.
For it is true that you cannot escape alone.
Your stories seem to differ,
for they do take different forms.
Yet their one content makes you brothers.
Dwell not upon the differences or you are lost.
It is in recognizing the common content;
the common need, that you are saved!*

*The mess that is your lives is an illusion.
What can the form of dreams resolve?
There is no answer to a question not yet asked,
for it would not be recognized.
Ask only this: Will I fulfill the function given me?
What else is there to ask?
Why must I know the form in which the answer comes to me?
God answers, "Yes" and it is done.
No more than this is meaningful to you.*

*It is not He Who would withhold the future and leave you fearful.
You could not accept His "yes" in forms you would not understand.
Things still in time unfold as is appointed them,
and many things remain undone as yet.
Plans based upon intangibles cannot be fully shown to you.
And what has not as yet occurred must be intangible.
This phase of learning has a single lesson
for all the forms your problems seem to take.*

*To God all things are possible,
but you must ask His answer only of Himself.
Perhaps you think you do,
but be you sure that if you had (did) you would be quiet now
and wholly undismayed by anything.
Do not attempt to guess His Will for you.
Do not assume that you are right
because an answer seems to come from Him.
Be sure you ask, and then be still and let Him speak.
There is no problem He cannot resolve,
for it is never He Who keeps apart
some questions to be solved by someone else.
You cannot share the world with Him
and make half of it His while half belongs to you.
Truth makes no compromise.
To keep apart a little is to keep all separate.
Your life, complete and whole,
belongs to God or none of it is His.
There is no thought in all the world
that seems more terrible.*

*Yet it is only when this thought appears in perfect clarity
that there is hope in peace and safety for the mind so long kept dark and twisted to avoid the
light.
This is the light.
Step back
and do not dwell upon the forms that seem to keep you bound.
You will fulfill your function.
And will have whatever you will need.
God does not fail.
But lay no limits on what you would give to Him to be resolved.
For He cannot offer a thousand answers
when but one is all there is.
Accept this one of Him,
and not one question will remain to ask.*

*Do not forget if you attempt to solve a problem,
you have judged it for yourself
and so you have betrayed your proper role.
Grandeur, which comes from God,
establishes that judgment is impossible for you.
But grandiosity insists you judge
and bring to this all problems that you have.
And what is the result?
Look carefully upon your life
and let it speak for you.*

*Is this frail breath and deep uncertainty your choice for you?
Or would you rather rest in surety,*

*certain you would not fail in your request
to have all problems happily resolved?
Do not mistake the fine disguises you can use to cover judgment.
It appears as charity, as mercy and as love;
as pity, understanding and as care.
And yet you know it is not what it seems
because the problem still remains unsolved
and comes to haunt your mind in evil dreams.*

*What have you kept from God
that you would hide behind your judgment?
What have you concealed
beneath the cloak of kindness and concern?
Use no one for your needs,
for that is "sin,"
and you will pay the penalty in guilt.*

*Remember you need nothing,
but you have an endless store of loving gifts to give.
But teach this lesson only to yourself.
Your brother will not learn it from your words
or from the judgments you have laid on him.
You need not even speak a word to him.
You cannot ask, "What shall I say to him?"
and hear God's answer.
Rather ask instead,
"Help me to see this brother through the eyes of truth
and not of judgment,"
and the help of God and all His angels
will respond.*

*For only here we rest.
We cast away our little judgments and our petty words;
our tiny problems and our false concerns.
We have attempted to be master of our destiny
and thought that peace lay there.
Freedom and judgment is impossible.
But by your side is One
Who knows the way.
Step back for Him
and let Him lead you
to the rest and silence
of the Word of God*

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Love and blessings, Sarah
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