

## ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



### LESSON 298 I love You, Father, and I love Your Son.

#### Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson is about the pain and suffering we experience in our daily lives when the love we are is kept from awareness through the many distractions of our lives, which we actually choose as a way to defend against love. The way we are restored to our reality is by allowing love back into our awareness, which can only be done by looking at how we currently block it. Now we can say, **"I accept instead what God establishes as mine, sure that in that alone I will be saved."** (W.298.1.5) In order to do that, I need to **"go through fear to meet my Love."** (W.298.1.5) This is why, initially, it feels like things get worse as we journey through this Course. We feel even more guilty as we watch our minds; but only because we are becoming more aware of the thoughts in our minds that were previously obscure to us even though they were always there.

This is a Lesson in gratitude. Just as we saw in Lessons 234, 239, and 292, respectively: **"We thank You, Father, that we cannot lose the memory of You and of Your Love."** (W.234.2.1) **"We thank you, Father, for the light that shines forever in us."** (W.239.2.1) **"We thank You, Father, for Your guarantee of only happy outcomes in the end."** (W.292.2.1) Only our own interference brings about anything other than happy outcomes. We interfere when *we* decide how things should be and plan and strategize accordingly, and thus we continue the same old cycle of guilt and fear. We interfere when we try to stay in control instead of being willing to surrender and allow the flow to be what it is. When we hold onto goals that lead us nowhere except on more senseless journeys, mad careers, and artificial values, we are interfering with the flow. We are pursuing goals that deliver nothing. This is so beautifully illustrated in the book I read some time ago called, *One Again* by Linda Jean McNabb. It is the story of her life---a story of undoing a past of abuse, alcoholism, and prostitution through forgiveness and living a life of trust.

Trust is the primary attribute of the Teacher of God as stated in the Manual for Teachers. We have a fear of love because its acceptance puts an end to the ego thought system, which clearly threatens our independent will. Why is gratitude such an important aspect of our restoration? **"Through your gratitude you come to know your brother, and one moment of real recognition makes everyone your brother because each of them is of your Father."** (T.4.VI.7.5) (ACIM OE T.4.VII.90) We recognize that we have been wrong, and we are grateful. We are grateful to see that our brother is not as we have defined him, but as our Father tells us he is. In fact, we recognize that we have been wrong about everything we have thought. In this recognition, we welcome being taught.

We learn of the importance of a grateful heart and thankful mind as a foundation for remembering God's love. As Jesus reminds us that we need not remain **"deaf to all the hymns of gratitude the world is singing underneath the sounds of fear."** (W.293.2.2) What is essential to our happiness is to be open to the experience of God's Love, which surrounds us all the time. His Love for us has not wavered. He has given us the Holy Spirit as an inner Call---the light within that we can always turn to. This is the Christ, the true Self, Who has come to search us out. **"Today we offer thanks that Christ has come to search the world for what belongs to Him."** (W.160.9.1) What belongs to Him is the part of our minds that has never left God and calls to us to return to where we already are. We are not aware of the reality of this Self until the blocks to love are undone.

Thus, to love our Father is to love His Son. It is to love everyone with no exceptions. What this means is that when the content of our minds is love, we see that same love in everyone. When we see "others" who we do not love, we are seeing parts of ourselves that we reject. This offers us another forgiveness opportunity, which is to look at these aspects of the unhealed self that we project onto others. When we condemn them and blame them, we are reflecting our own self-condemnation and self-attack. We accuse ourselves of what we see in our brothers and have denied in ourselves. Excluding anyone from love is not to know love. It is important that we look at all the hatred we project onto others, recognize that it is our own self-hatred, and then take full responsibility for it. All this self-hatred intrudes on our holy sight. **"All that intruded on my holy sight forgiveness takes away."** (W.298.1.3)

When any relationship brings up anger and hatred in us, our immediate tendency is to think that our reactions come about because of what the other person appears to be doing to us. We think that if they changed, we would not have to be upset. Jesus reminds us that this is not so. He reminds us, **"Beware of the temptation to perceive yourself unfairly treated."** (T.26.X.4.1) (ACIM OE T.26.VI.88) We are simply using the other person to make them responsible for the hateful thoughts that are in our wrong mind. Now we can use any difficult situation or relationship for healing our unhealed guilt. When we are willing to give over these hateful thoughts and be grateful that they have been revealed to us through our relationships, they will be transformed. **"My gratitude permits my love to be accepted without fear."** (W.298.1.1) I can be truly grateful that my way of seeing has been wrong because now there is a way for me to heal my wrong-minded perspective. **"Now hear God speak to you, through Him Who is His Voice and yours as well, reminding you that it is not your will to hate and be a prisoner to fear, a slave to death, a little creature with a little life."** (T.30.II.3.3) (ACIM OE T.30.III.35)

We can't bypass our fearful thoughts with nice sounding spiritual platitudes. We must look at them. We are fearful of letting go of all that we have made: our constructs, beliefs, self-concepts, expectations, values, uniqueness, and specialness. We are afraid of what we will lose and, most important, we fear the loss of our individual self, so we put up defenses. Yet we are nearing **"the end of senseless journeys, mad careers and artificial values."** (W.298.1.4) Now we increasingly become more willing to find another way that brings us the certainty, joy, and happiness we seek. As long as we still think that there is something to strive for in this world, we will have our feet in both camps---that of the ego and that of the Holy Spirit. In straddling two thought systems, we experience more and more conflict until our motivation for healing becomes the entire focus of our lives. It is not something that should be forced. Devotion to healing simply becomes a more appealing choice.

As we pray, **"Father, I come to You today, because I would not follow any way but Yours,"** (W.298.2.1) we are making a commitment and dedication that reflects our deep desire for the end of suffering. We affirm, once again, that we will not follow any way but His because His way is certain. And being forever grateful for God's holy gifts to us, we can be assured of a certain sanctuary where we are eternally safe. **"You are beside me. Certain is Your way. And I am grateful for Your holy gifts of certain sanctuary, and escape from everything that would obscure my love for God my Father and His holy Son."** (W.298.2.2-4)

Thus, we are called on today to be grateful for our brothers and to express that gratitude so we may no longer keep the love that is our inheritance from our awareness. Fear is how we keep it from awareness. When we express love and gratitude to our brothers, we are expressing it to God. When we offer our brother guilt, we do not experience the love of our Father. In other words, if I love God, it follows that I would be loving toward everyone else. If I don't love everyone else, I must be saying that I don't love God. I can't reach God and hate my brothers. If I say I want peace and attack my brother, I am taking a step away from it.

Our fear of being vulnerable with our brothers and joining with them is a fear of God. We fear being vulnerable because our perception of God is that of a big, powerful force outside of our own mind. What will happen to us if we open to the immense love that we are? We fear the end of control. We fear annihilation. As we read in Chapter 13, **"You have built your whole insane belief system because you think you would be helpless in God's Presence, and you would save yourself from His Love because you think it would crush you into nothingness."** (T.13.III.4.1) (ACIM OE T.12.III.14) Be grateful that you are wrong.

Love and blessings, Sarah  
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