

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 324 I merely follow, for I would not lead.

Sarah's Commentary:

There is a beautiful paragraph in Lesson 135 that says, **"What could you not accept, if you but knew that everything that happens, all events, past, present and to come, are gently planned by One Whose only purpose is your good? Perhaps you have misunderstood His plan, for He would never offer pain to you. But your defenses did not let you see His loving blessing shine in every step you ever took. While you made plans for death, He led you gently to eternal life."** (W.135.18.1-4)

When we **"choose to wander off"** (W.324.1.4) our appointed path, when we follow our dictates, and when we listen to the voice of the ego, we tarry and stray, yet we are assured that this is no cause for concern because we will return. **"Your loving Voice will always call me back, and guide my feet aright."** (W.324.1.5) We find many ways to delay; to follow our own will; to try to solve problems in our lives our way; to become involved in the events of the world based on what we believe needs to be done; to take sides in a debate whose purpose is to conquer; and to divert ourselves with distractions from the path. Thus, we wander off, sometimes for short intervals and sometimes for a long time, perhaps even lifetimes, yet we are told that we will be called back to this path of awakening and to the Christ Self we are.

Have you had the experience where you left your spiritual discipline for a time, and something called you to come back? I know it has happened to me where I seemed to be highly motivated and very committed and then had become involved in distractions and had fallen away from my daily practice. I invariably return to the Lessons when my life starts to feel unsatisfying, or a major challenge shows up. My desire for help strengthens my commitment, dedication, and motivation to get back on the path.

At some point, we come to the realization that God is our only goal. Increasingly, we see that there is no reason for involvement in dramas that are going on around us. It is easy to get caught up in the world, yet increasingly we see that there is a better way. **"In quietness are all things answered, and is every problem quietly resolved. In conflict there can be no answer and no resolution, for its purpose is to make no resolution possible, and to ensure no answer will be plain. A problem set in conflict has no answer, for it is seen in different ways."** (T.27.IV.1-3) (ACIM OE T.27.V.36)

Our way always brings pain. The longer we are with this teaching, the more irrelevant the distractions of the world become and the more miserable we feel when we stray from the path. Everything becomes stressful and difficult, and we feel victimized by events, forgetting that our

mind is the cause of everything that seems to happen to us. When we look for others to support our perspectives, we get deeper into distress.

There are things to be done in the world, but it is important to understand that regardless of what occupies our time and attention, our primary function here is the healing of the mind so that we can be a demonstration of His love in the world. Thus, we are called to accept the Atonement for ourselves, so we can become a clear channel of God's love as we go about our busy doings. It is about following in the way appointed us because when we think we know what to do by listening to the ego, we contribute to the problem. We can be grateful there is Someone in the mind Who is in charge, and thus, we choose to take the second place to gain the first. As long as we want to be number one, we push God out and try to take charge ourselves; but we have seen that the ego only leads us further into pain.

Jesus tells us, the only way to heal is to be healed. **"The miracle extends without your help, but you are needed that it can begin. Accept the miracle of healing, and it will go forth because of what it is. It is its nature to extend itself the instant it is born. And it is born the instant it is offered and received. No one can ask another to be healed. But he can let *himself* be healed, and thus offer the other what he has received."** (T.27.V.1.2-7) (ACIM OE T.27.VI.44) Our responsibility here is to do the healing so the miracle can extend through us. Healing in this world is always about surrendering our beliefs, our perspectives, our values, our fears, and our control and being willing to follow His guidance. When we come to see that all our interpretations are wrong, we willingly turn to the Holy Spirit to give us His interpretation.

"You may wonder how you can be at peace when, while you are in time, there is so much that must be done before the way to peace is open. Perhaps that seems impossible to you. But ask yourself if it is possible that God would have a plan for your salvation that does not work. Once you accept His plan as the one function that you would fulfill, there will be nothing else the Holy Spirit will not arrange for you without your effort. He will go before you making straight your path, and leaving in your way no stones to trip on, and no obstacles to bar your way. Nothing you need will be denied you. Not one seeming difficulty but will melt away before you reach it. You need take thought for nothing, careless of everything except the only purpose that you would fulfill. As that was given you, so will its fulfillment be. God's guarantee will hold against all obstacles, for it rests on certainty and not contingency. It rests on *you*. And what can be more certain than a Son of God." (T.20.IV.8.1-12) (ACIM OE T.20.V.36)

This passage encourages and motivates us to turn away from the ego and turn within to the truth. With that kind of promise and commitment from God through the Holy Spirit (the symbol of God's love placed in the right mind), why would we want to delay? Why would we want to go our own way? Where has it taken us? How much peace and joy have we found? Today is a day to recommit ourselves to our practice. Forgiveness is the way home. It is to watch our thoughts for any temptation to see ourselves as victimized. We remember that every gift we give, we only give to ourselves. As Lesson 297 says, **"Forgiveness is the only gift I give, because it is the only gift I want. And everything I give I give myself. This is salvation's simple formula."** (W.297.1.1-3) Accepting Atonement for ourselves is the way home. Anything else is truly a useless

journey. **"So let us follow One Who knows the way."** (W.324.2.1) If we do, we cannot lose the way. And for this, we can be truly grateful that we don't need to walk this path alone.

You might want to practice this Lesson by looking at something in your day, perhaps a situation or a relationship where you have an agenda, or you have set expectations of how things should be for you to be happy. When you do, notice that you are following your own guidance. We can be grateful that we are not in charge because our way will never bring us the joy and happiness available to us when we follow His guidance. We resist guidance when we want to be in control, but there is no freedom in our sorry little kingdom. **"Would you remain within your tiny kingdom, a sorry king, a bitter ruler of all that he surveys, who looks on nothing yet who would still die to defend it?"** (T.18.VIII.7.5) (ACIM OE T.18.IX.77)

Jesus tells us, in Lesson 47, if we are trusting in our own strength, we have every reason to be apprehensive, anxious, and fearful. **"What can you predict or control? What is there in you that can be counted on?"** (W.47.1.2-3) As he says in the Manual for Teachers: **"Who would attempt to fly with the tiny wings of a sparrow when the mighty power of an eagle has been given him?"** (M.4.I.2.2) (ACIM OE M.4.4) Why do we stubbornly hold onto control when such power is within us? **"What is there in you that gives you the recognition of the right solution, and the guarantee that it will be accomplished?"** (W.47.1.5) Clearly, with the ego as our guide, we cannot give this guarantee. All that is guaranteed is that we will experience fear, anxiety, depression, anger, and sorrow. As Jesus says, we can't put our faith in our weakness and still feel safe. When we turn to God and ask within for what to do, where to go, what to say, or how to see a situation, then we can be confident that the Answer is always given to every seeming problem.

The truth is within. We have a Guide Who will lead us home when we turn to Him. This loving Voice in us will always call us back when we wander off. We are being called to come out of this dream; and we do so by joining in purpose with our brothers and sisters, recognizing we can extend the peace and kindness in us to everyone we meet so we can know that it is in us. Thus, we no longer walk alone, but we walk together with everyone, recognizing we are all the same. Everyone is innocent regardless of what it looks like in the world. Everyone carries the same spark. They may not be aware of it, and thus, they do not realize they have a choice. We can be an example of that choice.

Yes, we may get off the path occasionally, but we know the steps we need to take to get back so we can keep moving forward. When you feel strong resistance, ask for help. Our Guide and Comforter is always there and willing to help us with any problem. However, if we are not ready Jesus says we should not force ourselves when resistance is strong. At such times, the answer may be to be gentle with ourselves and take a break. The encouraging thing is that Jesus is always gently and lovingly reminding us that we simply cannot lose the way. We can only wander off a while.

Love and blessings, Sarah
huemmert@shaw.ca

Published in DAILY LESSON MAILING by <http://www.jcim.net>
JOIN MAILING LIST HERE: <http://bitly.com/CIMSMailingList-Signup>