

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 361-365

**This holy instant would I give to You.
Be You in charge. For I would follow You,
Certain that Your direction gives me peace.**

Sarah's Commentary:

We end the year with these final words and use them to guide our practice for five days starting on December 27 and ending on December 31. **"This holy instant would I give to You. Be You in charge. For I would follow you, certain that Your direction gives me peace."** (W.361-365) This Lesson reminds us that the peace that is already ours is the only peace there is, given us by God. We won't find it outside ourselves. It is not dependent on circumstances or situations that show up in our lives, although it seems that way to us. The reason for this is that we have reversed cause and effect. Now we are learning that the cause of how we feel starts in the mind.

Peace is forever still and undisturbed in us, no matter how raucous the shrieks of the ego are, demanding attention. Certainty and peace are only found within—in the right mind, which is the home of our indwelling perfection. When we observe from above the battleground of this world, we become the witnesses of the drama of our lives. We observe the happenings from outside of the dream and recognize we made it all up. As we observe our experiences without judgment, we see that they contain our thoughts, beliefs and values, but our reality is separate from those thoughts. We let them be without engaging with them or giving them any attention or belief. They are not what we are. They don't define us. When we realize we are the dreamer of this dream, we recognize we can choose how to respond to illusory events. We no longer see ourselves as helpless victims of the world. **"In holiness were we created, and in holiness do we remain."** (W.360.1.5) Anything that is unlike holiness is our own self-created drama.

"This is a year of joy, in which your listening will increase and peace will grow with its increase. The power of holiness and the weakness of attack are both being brought into your awareness. And this has been accomplished in a mind firmly convinced that holiness is weakness and attack is power. Should not this be a sufficient miracle to teach you that your Teacher is not of you? But remember also that whenever you listened to His interpretation the results have brought you joy. Would you prefer the results of your interpretation, considering honestly what they have been? God wills you better. Could you not look with greater charity on whom God loves with perfect love?" (T.16.II.7.1-8) (ACIM OE T.16.III.17)

Those are profound words, which remind us that progress has been made. When we step back and take notice of our experience during the course of our time with these Lessons, we can see the contrast between the times we chose to attack and those where we made space for peace and miracles instead. This is proof of the power there is in choosing forgiveness rather than attack. This is the proof that when we no longer attend to the ego, it moves into the background of the

mind. Now we turn more and more to the wisdom of our deeper Self, and as we do, more peace and joy are evident in our lives.

There are periods in our lives with this Course when things seem to get worse. We may have gone through a divorce, job loss, or simply noticed more turmoil in our mind than before we started on this path. To the ego mind, this is an indication that the Course is not working. On the contrary, Jesus assures us that everything is helpful and that all things work together for good except in the perception of the ego. Thus, we need not be upset by the events in our lives. The shifts are always valuable although at the time we may not see them that way. The situations that arise in our lives give us an opportunity to see the darkness of the ego more clearly. It has always been there, but we have not always been aware of its presence to the extent we are now. As we watch the mind, we become more aware of our motivations. Observing our motivations and intentions is an important step in the undoing process. It is not a time to despair. To despair about how long it will take to undo the ego and how bound we seem to be to it is just a defense against the truth. In the experience of the holy instant, we see that this is so. Just know that the light is always shining in quiet constancy behind the darkness. It just awaits our acceptance. Don't put it off until some future time.

"Remember only this; you need not believe the ideas, you need not accept them, and you need not even welcome them. Some of them you may actively resist. None of this will matter or decrease their efficacy. But do not allow yourself to make exceptions in applying the ideas the workbook contains, and whatever your reactions to the ideas may be, use them. Nothing more than that is required." (W.PI.IN.9.1-5) (ACIM OE W.PI.In.5)

What is different now in your life? Take notice. For me, when I am in a state of distress, I can come back to peace much more quickly. I can let the anger go much more readily. I am more willing to admit that I am wrong, and thus, I am more humble in my willingness to ask. I take more responsibility for my thoughts by taking back my projections and putting them on the inner altar, thus making space for the miracle. I see more and more that I don't know my own best interests, and thus, I accept that everything is unfolding for my highest good in spite of how it appears at the moment. I make fewer judgments and withhold my opinions more and more.

I watch my mind more frequently for signs of distress and have become more willing to give them over. My stubborn nature has increasingly been a source of humor and laughter for me. I increasingly see challenges in my life as opportunities to look at what is going on in my mind. I am more willing to see how I have created the situation and am responsible for it. I have allowed myself to be a detective of my own experience, watching it with interest, investigating what is going on in my mind, and not judging the seemingly negative emotions, but simply being willing to bring them to the light. I increasingly see that I do not have to change anyone but myself. My job is to accept and love those who are struggling with themselves and to recognize it all as a reflection of my own struggle.

In Chapter 16, Jesus reminds us that we have many gifts offered to us by God, but we have ignored them because we have put our attention on what we think of as ourselves. He reminds us, **"His Voice has spoken clearly, and yet you have so little faith in what you heard, because you have preferred to place still greater faith in the disaster you made."** (T.16.II.8.4) (ACIM OE T.16.III.18) In other words, we falsely believe our lives have reality, and we are in control of what happens. **"Today, let us resolve together to accept the joyful tidings that disaster is not real and that reality is not disaster."** (T.16.II.8.5) (ACIM OE T.16.III.18) We plan and strategize on how to deal with what we think are our problems. Instead, when we

step back and listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we accept that what we think of as our lives in this world are not real, and what is truly real can never show up as disaster. **"Reality is safe and sure and wholly kind to everyone and everything. There is no greater love than to accept this and be glad. For love asks only that you be happy, and will give you everything that makes for happiness."** (T. 16.II.8.6-8) (ACIM OE T.16.III.19)

This is a time to notice the gifts that you have uncovered as you have applied these Lessons. What are the signs in your life that give witness to God's Love and care for you? These are the gifts that help us see that no matter what it looks like in the world, we are always safe. Yes, the body may be jeopardized, but we are not our bodies. Our Spirit is never at risk. Yes, we will be confronted by seeming problems, but they can teach us so much if we are willing to use them for that purpose. I have learned so much about forgiveness and release when I have turned a problem over to the Holy Spirit. He always solves it in ways that seem so counterintuitive. He has guided me to pay off a seeming adversary when on my own I would have fought the situation in court, and yet His counsel brought peace. It also has brought me the recognition that striving for money, status, position, power, and material things only brings pain. True gifts come only through forgiveness and healing and a willingness to accept the Atonement (Correction) for ourselves.

"This is the year for the application of ideas that have been given you. For the ideas are mighty forces, to be used and not held idly by." (T.16.II.9.4-5) (ACIM OE T.16.III.20) That is the biggest Lesson of all—to apply the Lessons we are given. They are of no use to us if we simply see them as beautiful thoughts. They are there to motivate us to apply them in every situation without exception. **"They have already proved their power sufficiently for you to place your faith in them and not in their denial. This year invest in truth and let it work in peace. Have faith in Him Who has faith in you. Think what you have really seen and heard and recognize it. Can you be alone with witnesses like these?"** (T.16.II.9.6-10) (ACIM OE T.16.III.20)

I have seen that these ideas are mighty and powerful forces that have changed my life. Why do I still hold doubt thoughts? I have seen seeming enemies become lasting friends. I have seen my marriage saved. I have seen angels appear on my path when disaster seemed to be looming—whether a flat tire, financial loss, or the death of my brother and my husband within three months of each other. Yet, while I have all kinds of evidence of His presence, I still wonder about the next time and still often rely on my own solutions. Now is the time for strong resolve to trust, to give up the "I know" mind, and to be gently led in every moment. We all have had proof of the Holy Spirit working through us, where we know what has happened has nothing to do with our plans and intentions. We increasingly see that nothing can be judged as good or bad because we simply don't know what anything is for. The proof of His Presence is when we get out of our own way and allow Him to radiate His Love through us. **"And the results have been to bring peace where there was pain, and suffering has disappeared to be replaced by joy."** (T.16.III.1.7) (ACIM OE T.16.IV.21) As we give love, we know it is in us. We know it by giving it.

Let's embrace these final Lessons and commit to living them as much as we can by trusting in the Power behind them, always working in our lives with total consistency. Our peace and joy have increased, as has our confidence in our Teacher. There is a gift behind each seeming disaster. The Holy Spirit guides us to the doorway that leads us out of each difficult situation. A miracle is waiting behind every problem. It awaits our acceptance and gives us the message that we are forever loved and never abandoned. Have faith in this Power. Extend the gift to others even when there appears to be a lack of appreciation and even attack. By extending love and forgiveness, we can give because we already have. Our brothers will accept the gifts we have given when they are ready. We don't need any more evidence. The Course works when we do the work. It is time to set

our intention for another year. It is time to recognize that there are no accidents in salvation. Everyone who shows up, or who has shown up in our lives, is there for a divine purpose.

Finally, we recognize procrastination hurts us. **"His is the only way to find the peace that God has given us. It is His that way that everyone must travel in the end, because it is this ending God Himself appointed. In the dream of time it seems to be far off. And yet, in truth, it is already here; already serving us as gracious guidance in the way to go. Let us together follow in the way that truth points out to us. And let us be the leaders of our many brothers who are seeking for the way, but find it not."** (W.PII.Our Final Lessons.IN.2.1-6)

How ready are we to come with total honesty to God and admit that we don't know, we are lost in the illusion, and our own answers for our lives are like flying with the wings of a sparrow when the wings of the eagle are always available to us? **"We come in honesty to God and say we did not understand, and ask Him to help us to learn His lessons, through the Voice of His Own Teacher."** (W.PII.OurFinalLessons.IN.6.1) **"And He will hear and answer me, because He speaks for God my Father and His holy Son."** (W.361-365.1.5)

Our final five days of Lessons require that we allow space in the mind for His Presence. It is a time to go beyond words, as Jesus tells us in the Introduction to these Final Lessons. Each practice period is now about entering the holy instant as much as possible. We put the Holy Spirit in charge of these practice periods and follow Him on the way to peace. Words mean little now. While He gives them to us, as we need them to focus our practice, the main intent is to go beyond words to experience. **"He is in charge by my request."** (W.361-365.1.4) We must now actively choose to go to Him when we are tempted to be right and feel superior, to make comparisons, and to want to win at someone's expense. We accept our function and our purpose every day and every moment to forgive. We set our intention each day as we awaken and as we go to sleep with God's promise on our lips. That is the only reason to be here in this world. There is no meaning apart from this.

We remember that the Atonement (our innocence) is fully present in us now. The Teacher is within. We can't know this when we blame anyone. Blame and Atonement are mutually exclusive states. We are One with our brothers with the same goal and with the same need. **"The light in them shines as brightly regardless of the density of the fog that obscures it. If you give no power to the fog to obscure the light, it has none."** (T.12.II.2.1-2) (ACIM OE T.11.III.15) We recognize that in order to know we are the way, the truth, and the life, the same as Jesus, we must commit daily to our practice of forgiveness, put Him in charge and follow Him in all we say and do.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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