

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 53 ~ REVIEW I [Review Lessons 11-15]

Sarah's Commentary:

We can never live in peace where chaos rules, and chaos is the nature of this world. It comes from chaotic thinking. It is our minds that have projected this whole chaotic world of insanity. Overriding these chaotic thoughts with positive affirmations about ourselves and the world is not the answer. We need to recognize how we have tried to adjust to this insane world and have become conditioned to it, putting our faith **"in the most trivial and insane symbols; pills, money, 'protective' clothing, influence, prestige, being liked, knowing the 'right' people, and an endless list of forms of nothingness that you endow with magical powers."** (W.50.1.3)

We have given illusions reality. We have given meaning and importance to the meaningless. We believe in the reality of this world and thus give it the power to upset us. We do our best to live in peace in this world, but there can be no real peace in chaos. In our attempts at survival and happiness in the world, we manipulate and strategize how we might best exert some semblance of control over events, situations, and people.

Now we are told we can be **". . . grateful that this world is not real."** (W.53.2.6) When we accept we **". . . cannot live in peace in such a world,"** (W.53.2.5) instead of continuing to try to adjust to it, we are given a way out. When we no longer value it, we can escape its hold on us. It is such a relief to give up our efforts in trying to depend on what is undependable. To expect the world to be a place of fairness and justice, and to expect it to be a place of safety and hope will always end in despair and disillusionment, but Jesus does not leave us there.

When we withdraw any hope of happiness in the world and place our trust in reality, we will **". . . escape all the effects of the world of fear."** (W.53.3.8) The events that seem to cause us to suffer have no reality. When we get this, we are no longer at the mercy of anything that seems to be happening. The world is not the cause of our upsets. Our upsets are the effect of our thoughts about the situations in our lives. The world has value as a classroom as it reflects the thoughts and beliefs we are holding in the mind. It is a witness to the choice we have made for the ego or the Holy Spirit.

"The fact that I see a world in which there is suffering and loss and death shows me that I am seeing only the representation of my insane thoughts, and am not allowing my real thoughts to cast their beneficent light on what I see." (W.53.5.4) Any suffering I experience today is caused by the thoughts and beliefs I hold. This meaningless world engenders fear because there is no safety or hope in madness. It is encouraging to know these crazy images can't prevail forever, and we will all return home. Only our fear makes the journey seem long. Only our resistance to releasing the ego makes it seem hard and brings suffering. **"The ego can accept the idea that return is necessary because it can so easily make the idea seem**

difficult. Yet the Holy Spirit tells you that even return is unnecessary, because what never happened cannot be difficult. However, you can *make* the idea of return both necessary and difficult." (T.6.II.11.1-3) (ACIM OE T.6.III.35)

Our thoughts are all over the map. We narrate and judge our experiences, crucify ourselves for our mistakes, fantasize about what we want in the world, hold grievances, plan, and strategize how to address our perceived problems. Our minds are never quiet. Our insane thoughts allow us no peace. That is why Jesus tells us, **"Insane thoughts are upsetting."** (W.53.2.2) Yet some of those insane thoughts we like. We actually don't realize that they keep us from peace. We may even take pride in them.

Our insane thoughts are the cause of this world. The world is a projection of those thoughts. That is why the world is insane, as it is the effect of our insane thoughts. We cannot conclude anything about our identity based on those thoughts. The Holy Spirit sees the world as a teaching device to bring us home. As Jon Mundy writes "We are in every instant in school. What are we learning here? Freud and Jung taught us—our problems lie buried—deep within. Go within. 'Go deeper'—says Ken Wapnick—responsibly look within. 'It's safe'. Bring healing to your insanity. Remember there is no sin and God does not condemn."

We have mistakenly thought that by managing the effects of our insane thoughts we could find some semblance of peace, but this will never work. We need to go back to the cause, which is our wrong mind. Our minds are split between the wrong mind, where our insane thoughts originate, and our right mind, which holds our real thoughts of peace and love. Only by looking at our insane thoughts in the wrong mind, facing our unworthiness and releasing our critical self-talk can we come into alignment with Spirit and experience the real world. It is an inner world of peace, joy, consistency, and harmony. From the experience of the real world, we see the world of illusion for what it is. We see it as an observer from above the battleground of this world.

When something upsets us, it is just another opportunity for healing. Welcome it. When we don't resist whatever shows up in our script, it brings us another opportunity for healing. We can't heal what we don't see. We must become observers of our ego strategies. By watching our thoughts, we bring them to awareness, which we must do if these thoughts are to be released to the Holy Spirit so we can achieve vision. The real world reflects our healed minds.

Our minds have the power to make a world in opposition to God. It is so important that we not deny this power. If we don't recognize the pain and suffering of the world, we will not be willing to take responsibility for our own minds as the cause. The illusory world, which is not created by God, demands that we see it as His creation and glorify the world instead of seeing it for what it is. The world is simply a reflection of the insane thoughts in our minds, and it is these thoughts that keep us in misery. Even when they bring us what we think will make us happy in the world, the happiness is only temporary and will not last. Happiness that is dependent on external circumstances is very unstable. **"Yet God's way is sure."** (W.53.5.5) Jesus appeals to us to recognize the power of our minds and to take responsibility for our thoughts, instead of blaming people, events, and circumstances "out there" for our lack of peace.

Underneath our insane thoughts are the Thoughts of God, and only these thoughts are real and sane. What are these Thoughts of God? They are the thoughts in our right mind. They are always there. We are incapable of separating ourselves from them, although we can be unaware of them. What is the experience of our real thoughts? Jesus says when we enter into light there is a deep sense of peace, however brief. We experience a deep sense of joy and increased alertness. (W.44, W.47, W.74) What is being said is, when we enter the realm of God's Thoughts, we have the

experience of love, holiness, peace, gratitude, and Oneness. In order to achieve this state, we need to approach our meditation time with desire, a sense of the importance of what we are trying to achieve, and a confidence that we will succeed. (W.45, W.49) We approach the experience as we would an altar. **"My real thoughts are in my mind. I would like to find them."** (W.45.6.4-5) Sink past the unreal thoughts that cover the truth and listen in deep silence, sinking deeply into peace.

We simply can't overlay peace on our thoughts of worry, anger, and distress. We can't force peace onto these thoughts. They have to be given over. We need to release these thoughts as they come up. We need to choose to give the thoughts up so peace can take the place of our distress. It takes desire, commitment, and willingness to do the work. It also takes effort, determination, and practice because of these monkey minds, which constantly hold a wild array of wrong-minded thoughts. This wild array of thoughts tortures our minds and keeps us from the truth of what we are. They can become very insistent looping in the mind allowing us no peace. Only peace, love, and joy are real, and it is only through the power of decision to choose, trust, and do the practice will we recognize where we truly abide—in God.

Instead of judging ourselves for what gets flushed up in our insane ego thought system, let's welcome the opportunity provided to look at these thoughts with equanimity. We can be happy that our long-denied thought system, based on guilt, is being brought to the forefront with every situation where we become anxious or are upset. Each situation that comes up shows us the insanity of our thinking. Now, we can choose again to release these thoughts, which block our joy and peace. Time was made for this, and if we are to use it well, we will use it only for healing our mistaken beliefs, mistakes we have made in the past and all of our regrets where we fear the consequences of those mistakes in the future. Now we can be grateful to all those people, situations, and events that come into our day, no matter how difficult the interactions may be, because it gives us another opportunity to see our hidden guilt and to choose healing.

Our thoughts are the only indicator of which mind is currently in operation. **"It is my thoughts that tell me where I am and what I am."** (W.53.5.3) The Lesson says, **"The images I have made cannot prevail against Him because it is not my will that they do so."** (W.53.5.6) Today, certain things were not going my way and my response was one of anger, which covered over feelings of helplessness and frustration. I took some time to inquire within and noticed fear that I did not have control in this situation. I recognized a belief I held that things need to go my way for me to be happy.

Underneath the fear of lack of control was a feeling of unworthiness. Going deeper into my mind really helped me to uncover something I had kept hidden from my awareness. These dissociated thoughts and feelings are projected onto others around us, and we then blame them for what we are feeling, rather than realizing it is our own dissociated thoughts projected out. I immediately felt the release once I had become honest with what was going on for me. Denial is our enemy. Awareness and willingness help to set us free. Only the meaning we give our thoughts needs to be withdrawn. This opens us up again to the flow of love.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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