

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 25

I do not know what anything is for.

Sarah's Commentary:

If there is to be room for learning, then we must come to a place of humility and admit we really don't know anything. The mind that is humble can learn, but the "I know everything" mind has a lot of resistance to admitting that maybe it has been wrong about everything. It feels personally insulting to be told that what we have taught ourselves is all wrong. It is disconcerting and even disorienting to "not know," but the Course is clear that what we have taught ourselves is totally opposite to what we are learning now.

"You have very little trust in me as yet, but it will increase as you turn more and more often to me instead of to your ego for guidance. The results will convince you increasingly that this choice is the only sane one you can make. No one who learns from experience that one choice brings peace and joy while another brings chaos and disaster needs additional convincing."(T.4.VI.3.1-3) (ACIM OE T.4.VII.86)

"I am teaching you to associate misery with the ego and joy with the spirit. You have taught yourself the opposite. You are still free to choose, but can you really want the rewards of the ego in the presence of the rewards of God?" (T.4.VI.5.6-8) (ACIM OE T.4.VII.93)

"My trust in you is greater than yours in me at the moment, but it will not always be that way." (T.4.VI.6.1) (ACIM OE T.4.VII.89)

Jesus says that he has chosen us for this learning and that he does not choose God's channels wrongly. It is such a beautiful and powerful endorsement of how, if we stay with this teaching, there are great rewards. We don't experience them currently because of our investment in the ego. We are learning to walk in faith and trust by applying these Lessons to our daily experiences. Doing so will bring us to a place of peace.

Today, we learn that we do not know what anything is for. It is all about purpose. He says, **"Purpose is meaning."** (W.25.1.1) **"You perceive the world and everything in it as meaningful in terms of ego goals."** (W.25.2.1) Ego-goals serve our own interests as we perceive them. Yet we learned that we don't know our own best interests. Everything in our day and in our lives is about using the world for our own purposes. Those purposes are always about how to support and preserve ourselves as separate individuals. Our goal is to avoid as much pain and achieve as much pleasure as we can. As such, it is all about what we believe will make us feel good, but what if we don't know what that is? What if we are totally on the wrong track, and what we think will make us feel good just takes us deeper and deeper into the illusion?

Jesus is telling us, ". . . **the ego is not you.**" (W.25.2.2) We have identified with a self that Jesus says is not who we are. This self is our bodily identity and personality. Jesus says that what we are is not the "you" that seems to be living in this world but a grand and magnificent eternal Self that is far beyond the body and the personality. This is why the goals we set for ourselves ". . . **have nothing to do with your own best interests.**" (W.25.2.2) The ego is all about self-preservation, which means that our goals are all about taking care of our own interests at the expense of everyone else. This brings more guilt into the mind and thus more and more suffering. How could that possibly serve our interests? Now, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are in the process of undoing all that does not serve us. We are rewarded with more joy and peace as we join with Him Who does have our best interests at the forefront.

We try to serve our best interests, but the ego has no idea what they are. While our spirit languishes, the ego gets what it wants. We are feeding it instead of the Self we are. The goals that serve the ego will never bring the peace and happiness for which we yearn. When we see this, we become willing to ask the Holy Spirit for His guidance of where we are to be and what we are to do, and say, "**I am here only to be truly helpful. I am here to represent Him Who sent me. I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do, because He Who sent me will direct me. I am content to be wherever He wishes, knowing He goes there with me. I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal.**" (T.2.V.A.18.2-6) (ACIM OE T.4.IX.106)

When I admit that my ". . . **goals are really concerned with nothing**" (W.25.3.2) and stop cherishing my interests as I perceive them, I open my mind to be shown the way. When we wake up in the morning, we generally move into high gear and start to plan our day. Most of our plans are about serving the separate self. We constantly look at ways to support the separate self, and when our plans don't work, we get upset. These are what Jesus calls our "personal interests," but we are reminded there are no personal interests, so our goals serve nothing at all. We are simply serving a false identity. Our own goal is to preserve our individuality, our uniqueness, and our separate self. When we come to see what we are doing, we become motivated to change the goal from "personal" interests to realizing we all share the same Self and the same interest, which is to awaken from this dream and remember who we are as One.

Jesus reminds us we can't gain or lose separately from our brothers, and all our personal ego goals are in competition with our brothers. "**What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?**" (T.5.II.7.11) (ACIM OE T.5.IV.25) "**If you seek for satisfaction in gratifying your needs as you perceive them, you must believe that strength comes from another, and what you gain he loses.**" (T.15.VI.3.3) (ACIM OE T.15.VII.58)

It is in our best interests is to take everything we have made for the purpose of keeping us in this world and use it for the purpose of waking up from this dream. In other words, every situation, event, circumstance, and person in our lives, when used by the ego for its purposes, keeps us rooted in the body and in the world. However, when turned over to the Holy Spirit to use for His purpose, they provide a classroom for forgiveness. When we shift our purpose to awakening, everything in the world, including our bodies, can be used for a holy purpose.

When the purpose is shifted, everything can be used to serve our best interests. For this to happen, we need to turn to Jesus as our teacher and ask him what we should do, rather than turning to the ego. Now, everything in the world is given meaning and seen from a new perspective. It all becomes simple when we recognize there are only two purposes that can be chosen. One is for the purpose of the ego to keep us in the world and the other is for the purpose of the Holy Spirit to help us awaken to who we really are. In each moment, we are serving one purpose or the other.

When we serve the ego's purpose, everything in our day is focused on satisfying our needs for specialness.

Jesus acknowledges that, at the superficial level, we do know the purpose. For example, I know that the purpose for painting my hallway is because I want it to be prettier and look fresh and clean. I know that the purpose for going shopping is for groceries to make meals for the family. I know that the purpose for going to the movies is to be entertained. I know that the purpose for doing my bills is to stay on top of my payments; but there is a deeper purpose for everything. When I go to the movies, the deeper purpose is to watch my projected thoughts and be willing to look at my judgments. When I shop for groceries, the deeper purpose is to see the cashier's interests as not separate from my own. She is not there just to take my money. Perhaps I have been sent there for a holy encounter, to be truly helpful to her in some way or to look at my impatience when others are ahead of me in the line. When Helen was guided to go to a certain store to buy a coat, the purpose for being there was to help the man who needed her help. We don't always know why a situation is being presented in the way it is, but when our only purpose is to heal the mind, then everything that happens can serve that purpose. Whatever we are doing, and wherever we find ourselves, it is to use those events and situations as a backdrop for healing. What is it for? Ask that in everything.

Why did I have this accident? Why did I run into this person? Why was I at this funeral? Why am I sitting here doing this commentary? Why did this person come into my life? Why am I requesting this book? What is the purpose of going to this conference? Behind every event, there is a deeper purpose that we will only get when we are ". . . **willing to give up the goals you have established for everything.**" (W.25.5.1) Remember, he tells us that this is not about which of our goals are good and which of them are bad. They are simply meaningless when used by the ego. If we look at some goals as "good," we are more likely to think that they serve us in some way, while our "bad" goals may attract us by their guilty pleasures. We just need to remind ourselves that we are pursuing something that is meaningless. Does that mean we have to give up our meaningless goals? No. We are only being asked to watch our thoughts as part of the forgiveness practice. Jesus described this practice in Lesson 23.5 where we are asked to bring awareness to the guilt in the mind that we are projecting onto the world. We acknowledge that our upsets are not caused by what someone did or did not do but the cause of our upset is in the mind—in the interpretation we give neutral events. By bringing awareness to our attack thoughts without judging ourselves for them, we can now give them over to the Holy Spirit.

We are asked not to judge our mistakes. In fact, it is more helpful to have gratitude for them as they provide us another opportunity for healing. Each mistake is a gateway or opportunity to recognize our darkness. Be glad to notice how you act from guilt, unworthiness, fear, and self-interest. Be willing to discover thoughts, beliefs, and opinions you hold that are not true. We simply observe them and ask the Holy Spirit to interpret them for us. The Holy Spirit is the One who then shines them away so that the guilt is gone. The thoughts we previously held no longer have any power. Where darkness was there is now the love and light that is in us but was concealed by the darkness. It is not about changing behavior. Behavior will shift naturally.

The practice today is for two minutes, six times, beginning ". . . **with the slow repetition of the idea for today followed by looking about you and letting your glance rest on whatever happens to catch your eye, near or far, 'important' or 'unimportant, 'human' or 'nonhuman.'** With your eyes resting on each subject you so select, say, **for example:**

***"I do not know what this chair is for.
I do not know what this pencil is for.
I do not know what this hand is for.***

"Say this quite slowly, without shifting your eyes from the subject until you have completed the statement about it. Then move on to the next subject, and apply today's idea as before." (W.25.6.7-8)

By admitting we don't know, we are making room for the Holy Spirit to bring His purpose forward so that everything we have made can be used by Him for our awakening to the truth of who we are.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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