

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 90 Review II ~ Lesson 79 and Lesson 80

Sarah's Commentary:

We think the world gives us all kinds of problems. People attack us for things we don't deserve. Things break down. Germs seem to invade our bodies. The boss does not understand us. We don't like our work. A colleague turns on us. A relationship falls apart. We are behind in our rent. A friend betrays us. We lose our money. Our children don't respect us. There are myriad seeming problems that cause us grief.

The source of all these problems seems to originate outside of us. We don't see ourselves as the cause of them all. Things just seem to happen to us, and we don't see ourselves as having anything to do with these happenings. Jesus tells us, "**A child is frightened when a wooden head springs up as a closed box is opened suddenly, or when a soft and silent wooly bear begins to squeak as he takes hold of it. The rules he made for boxes and for bears have failed him and have broken his 'control' of what surrounds him.**" (T.30.IV.2.2-3) (ACIM OE T.30.V.50) He says that we are like those children, startled by unexpected events in the world where we seemingly have no control over all of the chaotic happenings. Things just seem to happen out of the blue.

The way we see our problems is much the same as children playing with toys that frighten them. What we call problems, he equates with toys, as they have no importance in reality. What we take seriously and what seems to create misery for us, can't threaten who we are. Nothing matters when looked at from the point of view of eternity. However, while we still identify with the body and the world, problems can have serious consequences for us. Our problems certainly seem very real, and we are often frightened by them, as they make us feel very vulnerable. We think they give us reason to attack and to set up defenses. To us, the world becomes a place where there is no safety because the rules we made and the expectations we have of how things should be are not being met

What Jesus helps us to understand is that, regardless of how it looks to us, all problems can be traced back to grievances in the mind. We believe that our happiness depends on how things go for us in the world. When events, people, and circumstances don't go our way, we hold grievances. We hold others responsible and blame them for how we feel. We have given the situation the power to disturb us. Events have no meaning except the meaning we give them. In other words, what upsets us are not the events themselves, but the interpretation we give them. Our problems are illusory, as are the solutions. While a perceived problem may be addressed in form, it is never fully resolved. It will simply reoccur in another form until we recognize the source of all problems as the guilt in the mind.

When we have a problem, there is always a grievance lurking behind it. If I have a problem, I need to take the time to look at the grievance I am holding. What is the judgment behind it? What is the belief in the mind? Am I willing to let it go and accept the miracle instead of trying to control what happens? Can I just accept that perfect safety, perfect happiness, and perfect peace are available to me regardless of what is swirling around me? Can I remember that there is always an inner tranquility that nothing can disturb? When I uncover the cause of my upsets, "**And I invite the solution to come to me through my forgiveness of the grievance and my welcome of the miracle that takes its place,**" (W.90.1.6) the truth within is revealed. The miracle is always there and available. Nothing has to go our way in order to be tranquil as peace is our natural state and always available.

When the separation was healed, all problems were solved for all time. If that is the case, the part of my mind that chooses with the Holy Spirit can experience a miracle instead of distress. I can choose peace, regardless of what seems to be happening, if I am willing to take responsibility for my grievances instead of seeing the cause outside of my own mind. When I resist giving over my judgments of how I see the situation, I can ask for help so I might become more willing. Regardless of the decision I make, I am nevertheless completely innocent. I may simply not be ready at the moment to let my grievances go and need to take time to come to readiness. Meanwhile, I can choose to rest with the disturbance, accept my current situation, and trust I will find my way through when I am ready. **God in His knowledge is not waiting, but His Kingdom is bereft while you wait. All the Sons of God are waiting for your return, just as you are waiting for theirs. Delay does not matter in eternity, but it is tragic in time. You have elected to be in time rather than eternity, and therefore believe you are in time. Yet your election is both free and alterable. You do not belong in time. Your place is only in eternity, where God Himself placed you forever.** (T.5.VI.1)

When we turn to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to show us the situation as He sees it, we are shown another way of looking at every problem as an opportunity to forgive and heal. Problems are how we maintain our investment in the world. We are convinced that we are the victims of an unfair world, which keeps us constantly occupied as we try to address one problem after another. Thus, we see the world as the cause and we are the effect. If this truly is the case, we would have reason for our grievances, but Jesus tells us it is the other way around. The mind is cause and the world is the effect. When we see the world as the cause, there is no way out, as the power is then outside us. If it were true that problems are coming at us from outside of ourselves, we would continue to be hapless victims, and there would be no resolution possible and no reason for hope.

What God did not create cannot be true, and God did not create the world. The world is a projection of the thought system of separation. Thus, all our problems are illusory. They are all a projection of the guilt in our own minds, and guilt demands punishment. The situation we experience as a problem simply can't be real because perfect love would not have created it, and what is not real has no power over us. We think that if this situation were different, we would be happy, yet happiness is only a choice made in the mind. When the grievance is released, so is the problem. Every problem is some sort of grievance. When we hold grievances, we experience ourselves as alone and separate. A grievance separates me from whomever I hold a grievance against. The only way I can be happy is to let the grievance go so I can know that separation is not real.

When we appeared to separate from God, He immediately provided us with the Answer. The Answer is the Holy Spirit—a symbol of God's love in our right minds. This love shines forth when we release our grievances. The only problem is to keep choosing to separate from the Love of God,

and the only solution is to bring our mistaken choice to the truth. ***"The miracle behind this grievance will resolve it for me. The answer to this problem is the miracle that it conceals."*** (W.90.2.3-4)

Nothing has to change outside. The only change possible is in our own minds. If we really believed that everything starts in our own minds and that the power rests with us to choose the miracle instead, the solution would be immediately available to every problem. Why do we experience such resistance to letting go of our worries, anger, depression, and frustrations? This is because, with the separation and all that has come with it (the body and the world), we now value our separate identity and don't want to let go of our unique and special self. This explains our investment in this world. However, while we are invested in the world, we don't want the responsibility for having created it. Instead, we want to see ourselves victimized and betrayed so others could be blamed for our condition and the condition of the world. This keeps us invested in the world and all the problems that arise as a result. Until we truly accept that clinging to our separate self is the source of all our unhappiness, all our suffering, and all our pain, we will not be willing to let it go.

"I believe that the problem comes first, and time must elapse before it can be worked out." (W.90.3.3) That is the belief we hold and that is precisely how we misuse time. We don't see that the problem and answer are actually simultaneous so that at the moment of separation the Answer was given. Isn't that what an all-powerful, loving Father would do? Why would he want us to suffer? When we think that we have problems and God is not providing us with the answers, it is because *we* refuse to accept the miracle which is available right then. We are the ones holding back the healing and the help available to us. We do that by holding onto, and indeed cherishing, the grievance. This is something to really reflect on and ask for His help in releasing the grievance and accepting the miracle. He gives us specific practices for this purpose, asking us to recognize today that we need not wait for any problem to be resolved. The answer to the problem has already been given, and we simply need to accept it. Time cannot separate the problem from the solution unless we allow it.

Jesus is not asking us to ignore the problems that seem to show up in our lives. He merely asks us to consider the real solution, which is to let go of the grievance. When we do, the answer is given immediately. In the world, whatever the problem, the resolution may indeed take some time, but our function is to recognize it is never our real problem. Our real problem is that we have excluded ourselves from love. We have forgotten who we are. When we let the Holy Spirit help us, truth dawns on our minds. We experience the peace and joy of our Self where our true freedom lies. Through forgiveness, we are released from the cycle of guilt and fear. Now we can see that problems in our lives provide opportunities for healing. They are part of the script we have called into our lives.

We experienced this recently when our car died about 100 km from home on a holiday weekend in a small town where there were no taxis available to take us to a hotel and no autoclub services or tow trucks. The one saving grace is that as the car was dying it turned out we were close to the lot of a Canadian Tire store which was within one hour of closing but could do nothing to help us. Initially the mind went to all kinds of options of what to do but there were no answers available, it was late at night and was raining heavily. In that moment everything seemed hopeless. So we simply sat in the car and quietly joined with each other and asked to see this situation in peace trusting that there was an answer that we just could not see in the moment. We asked for guidance and the answer came to go into the store, talk with the salesperson we had already met there to see if we could pay him to drive us home which is what he did yet refused to be paid. So we wrote a letter to the local paper and to his supervisor. It turned out the supervisor gave him a bonus and

he told us that the story in the local paper had made him a hero. Our friends who heard the story that he was supporting his family in the Philippines raised some money for him and our car was towed back to our mechanic. So everyone was blessed and we saw that there was no problem when we opened to peace, guidance and the opportunity to receive a miracle.

"Let me realize today that the problem is always some form of grievance that I would cherish." (W.90.1.2) We can all relate to how we like to hang onto our grievances. This reminds me of the *Psychotherapy Pamphlet*, where Jesus says we don't shun guilt but embrace it, hug it close and shelter it, seeing it as protecting us and thus defending it, instead, against the love. **"God may not enter here' the sick repeat, over and over, while they mourn their loss and yet rejoice in it."** (P.2.VI.1.4) Often, we find that we really don't want to let go of grievances. We still see **"order of difficulty in miracles."** (T.1.I.1.1) (ACIM OE T.1.1) To us, some problems seem bigger and more difficult; yet Jesus reminds us they are all the same because they are all illusory.

I don't know what the outcome of any perceived problem will actually be, but what I need to do is accept that the problem has already been solved. There is a miracle behind every perceived problem. Jesus makes it clear that the miracle will manifest in a way we can understand. It may be in form, and it may not. Today, we are asked to recognize the problem has already been solved, and we can be freed of the temptation to blame and see anyone as responsible for keeping us in fear. If I am in fear, it is my choice. My responsibility is to do the healing work by giving over the fear to the Holy Spirit, Who will reinterpret the way I perceive the problem.

Today, I ask for the willingness to recognize my problems have been solved. I ask for help that I might have faith in those who seemingly cause me difficulties and also faith in the Holy Spirit. Let me see every problematic situation through the eyes of Love. Let me know every grievance will be replaced with a miracle and everything has already been resolved. **"The working out of all correction takes no time at all. Yet the acceptance of the working out can seem to take forever."** (T.26.VIII.6.1-2) (ACIM OE T.26.IX.72,73)

Love and blessings, Sarah
huemmert@shaw.ca

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