



LESSON 108

To give and to receive are one in truth.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson emphasizes the importance of getting the idea, **"To give and to receive are one in truth."** (W.108) Jesus tells us, **"Vision depends upon today's idea. The light is in it, for it reconciles all seeming opposites."** (W.108.1.1-2) I thought about how the Course is written to make us stop and really puzzle over a thought. It reminded me of how Jesus spoke in parables in the Bible. His parables often required pondering the meaning in order to understand what he intended to convey. It is like the book, *The DaVinci Code*, where the author tells us that Leonardo DaVinci put obscure messages in his works for those who took the time to ponder what they might mean. Apparently, DaVinci did not go along with the way Constantine had changed the Bible to reflect his own personal political interests. One of those changes was the diminishing of the role of women where Mary Magdalene was described as a whore. In fact, we are told she was highly esteemed by Jesus and was, by some accounts, married to him. When DaVinci painted *The Last Supper*, he included a woman, presumably Mary Magdalene, sitting on the right-hand side of Jesus. Since we don't expect to see a woman, we don't see her.

DaVinci was dependent on the church for his income, so he did not want to displease the church while still reflecting the truth as he saw it. It takes some discernment to see the message he was attempting to communicate. In the same way, we need to read the Course with this kind of careful discernment instead of projecting our own preconceived meaning onto what is being said. To really get the messages in the Course, we need to take the time to reflect deeply about what Jesus is telling us, as each sentence is rich in meaning. Thus, it is important to read slowly and carefully and not brush over the words as if we already know the meaning from our own past conditioning. With each reading we do and with a willingness to be open to learning, deeper and more profound meaning is revealed.

When Jesus says, **"The light is in it [today's Lesson], for it reconciles all seeming opposites,"** (W.108.1.2) he is reminding us that with vision comes recognition. There is nothing in opposition to God's Love. With separation came seeming opposition. God's Son is now seemingly in a world of opposition that is in opposition to God Himself because this world is a state where differences, contrasts, and comparisons prevail. Opposition is of the ego and is expressed as a state of separation from God. Oneness seems to be shattered into billions and billions of separate forms.

"And what is light except the resolution, born of peace, of all your conflicts and mistaken thoughts into one concept which is wholly true?" (W.108.1.3) Jesus is talking here about the state of One Mindedness, where separation has been healed and every conflict resolved, with no opposing perspectives. Acceptance of the one concept that is wholly true is acceptance of the Atonement, which is the correction of our wrong-minded thinking. Instead of trying to resolve conflict and trying to fix problems that we perceive through our own thinking minds, we are reminded that the only answer is acceptance. When we come to recognize that we all share the same

interests and we all have the same goal of awakening, even though it is not always apparent, we come to recognize our sameness. We overlook the error in others and recognize that only our own mind needs correction. This is what resolves all conflict.

"True light that makes true vision possible is not the light the body's eyes behold. It is a state of mind that has become so unified that darkness cannot be perceived at all. "

(W.108.2.1-2) With vision, we see the truth where there are no conflicting thoughts. This is not about seeing with the physical eyes, but it is a state of mind. We can't be at peace if we hold the ego's thought system of individuality, differences, and competing interests. To have peace, all conflicting thoughts must be reconciled; not by integrating them but by realizing that everything here is a dream. Only the real world reflects the unified Thought of God. Our reality is spirit, yet our belief is that we are a body and a personality. When we hold two opposing thought systems in our mind, there is internal conflict. The only resolution is to side with truth.

What creates the shift is when we ask for help to see who our brother really is and to see that we are the same divine Self. There is a spark of divinity in everyone. We see it when we perceive with vision. The light in our minds recognizes the light in other minds. When we connect with this light in our own minds, we experience peace and healing. As long as we believe in opposing thoughts, our minds will be in a state of darkness and confusion. What we are aiming for is the healing of our perception into a single unified thought of love.

A unified thought is one that does not depend on which comes first---giving or receiving. In fact, they are simultaneous, meaning both occur together. In the world, it seems to us that when we give, we lose, and when we receive, we gain. **"Here it is understood that both occur together, that the Thought remain complete."** (W.108.4.2) Whatever we give, we receive at the same time. This is something we don't readily understand. It does seem to us like giving and receiving are opposites, yet we all have had the experience of giving, and in the giving, having the joy of it, thus receiving the gift for ourselves in the same instant. Yet it is deeply ingrained in us that what we give away, we lose. In the world, when we identify with the ego thought system, we are more inclined to try to get. To us, giving feels like a loss, but the truth is that we can't give what we don't have, and we can never receive what we have not given.

The forms of the world hold value for us, and giving them up feels like a loss. This is why receiving makes us feel guilty. It seems that we are taking, and those from whom we try to take must suffer loss. Giving and receiving are the same. **"And in this understanding is the base on which all opposites are reconciled, because they are perceived from the same frame of reference which unifies this Thought."** (W.108.4.3) Now we see that we do not have separate interests. Love transcends everything in this world, and only when we experience the healing in any difficult relationship, do we understand this is so. This is because we no longer have opposing thoughts. In other words, if we just get this one learning with anyone, it is generalized to all opposing thoughts. Getting this one Lesson would unify all our thoughts into one Thought. This means it would heal the separation. When the Thought of love extends through me, I gain. It is now impossible to lose anything because we gain everything.

Jesus reminds us, **"To learn that giving and receiving are the same has special usefulness, because it can be tried so easily and seen as true."** (W.108.6.1) Doesn't this get your attention, especially when he assures us, **". . .it always works, in every circumstance where it is tried. . . "** (W.108.6.2) When we do this practice today and apply this Lesson to every situation we encounter, we bring the miracle. I need do nothing means it is done through us. There is nothing for us to fix, control, or manage. Ultimately, as we accept the correction in each situation, the Lesson gets generalized, so we see one mind is all minds.

It is like forgiveness, where we forgive one brother completely and generalize it to all brothers. We can't give what we don't have, and we can't receive what we don't give. There is only one Mind, and It is Love. He tells us this is easily seen to be true, and it is. When we offer peace to anyone, we will experience it in the very same instant. Whatever is truly offered is experienced at the same moment. He says that we should watch to see how quickly it returns to us. **"And it will come to you in the amount in which you gave it."** (W.108.9.2) If we want to experience peace, we must extend peace.

What is wonderful in this message is to appreciate that we are not dependent on any circumstances outside ourselves to have peace and joy. We have the Holy Spirit as the healer in every situation whenever we step back and turn to Him for the answer to any problem instead of turning to the ego. He puts the answer where the problem is. The answer is always a miracle. The ego will give us reasons to be upset, disappointed, distressed, and worried. When we turn to it for advice on what to do to address how we feel, we just go further down the rabbit hole, experiencing even more distress as there is never any resolution with the ego. The quiet center where truth abides will resolve all difficulties. For me, the biggest learning is to remember what Jesus teaches about patience. **"Now you must learn that only infinite patience produces immediate effects."** (T.5.VI.12.1) (ACIM OE T.5.VIII.81) Time is an illusion. Everything is already resolved and is awaiting our readiness to accept the miracle that is always there behind every seeming problem.

Yes, he acknowledges that it is a simple lesson and not at all difficult for us to do, yet he says it will teach us much. (W.108.10.1) He really is encouraging us to do the Lesson today because, as we do, we will understand the relationship between cause and effect---giving and receiving. **"Father, I must return Your Love for me, for giving and receiving are the same, and You have given all Your Love to me."** (W.225.1.1) There is no loss in giving. There is only gain. We don't always see that what we give, we receive. **"The interval you think lies in between the giving and receiving of the gift seems to be one in which you sacrifice and suffer loss."** (T.26.VIII.2.6) (ACIM OE T.26.IX.69)

We still think that when we give, we lose because of the interval of time, but the gift we give is received by us as we give it. Nothing is lost. **"Here are both giving and receiving seen as different aspects of one Thought whose truth does not depend on which is seen as first, nor which appears to be in second place."** (W.108.4.1) This also applies in the same way to our attack thoughts. My thoughts of attack on you are an attack on me. Whatever I give, I receive for myself. One way to understand this is to see that there is only mind. No one is really outside of us. When we truly understand that we only deprive ourselves and only hurt ourselves, we will unplug our need to attack and blame, and focus instead on giving what we want to receive.

Today is an opportunity for us to make **". . . much faster progress now."** (W.108.10.2) The reason for this is that **"Effect and cause will be far better understood from this time on. . ."** (W.108.10.2) Jesus asks that we think of these exercises as **"quick advances"** (W.108.10.3) in our learning, and with each repetition, we will move faster and be more certain of the truth of this statement: **"To give and to receive are one in truth."** (W.108) **"To everyone I offer quietness. To everyone I offer peace of mind. To everyone I offer gentleness."** (W.108.8.6-8) We give what we expect to receive. **"And it will come to you in the amount in which you gave it."** (W.108.9.2)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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