

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 263 My holy vision sees all things as pure.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson is about seeing everyone through holy vision instead of looking for guilt, faults, warts, and differences. In other words, it is to see the innocence in everyone so we can know it in ourselves. We see differences in bodies, personalities, and what bodies do. The Lesson is not about denying the differences we see, but not using what we see with our eyes to judge others. We are called to **"look on all we see through holy vision with the eyes of Christ."** (W.263.2.1) Whatever we look upon and however things appear to the body's eyes, let us pray **"that we may pass them by in innocence, and walk together to our Father's house as brothers and the holy Sons of God."** (W.263.2.2)

To see with vision is to recognize we are all the same beyond what the body's eyes show us. With the "evidence" offered by the eyes, seen at our request, we are given evidence of people as sinful, evil, unkind, demanding, and guilty, and we judge them as different than ourselves. We do so because we want to see guilt in them, rather than in ourselves. This maintains the separation and makes others responsible for it! It is how we have chosen to maintain our innocence at their expense. It is why we choose suffering for ourselves because then we can blame someone else for it. And yet, when we see with vision, which is to see beyond appearances, we see that no matter what the perceived differences are, we are all purely divine, perfect, and holy. In other words, we are One Self. We share the same attributes given us in our creation by our Creator. When we see anyone less than that, it provides us with another opportunity for healing. We do the healing when we are willing to look within at our self-condemnation that we project on others. Thus, they become a mirror of the unhealed guilt in our own minds. We can't heal ourselves, but when we are willing to take responsibility for our projections and truly and sincerely surrender them to the Holy Spirit, He does the rest.

I have always had difficulty with people who whine and complain about life. I have always valued a "can do" attitude. I started out years ago as a social worker, and it took some time before I came to the recognition that my need to rescue was all part of my own need for healing. I came to see how the role of social worker that I chose kept me safe from my own vulnerability and belief in weakness. By being in the role of rescuer of others, I was mostly able to keep my own sense of weakness and unworthiness out of my awareness. By seeing others as weak and vulnerable, rather than myself, I could maintain my false belief in my own strength. But it was just a compensation for my hidden belief in my vulnerability. While I was seemingly helping others, I either identified with their pain or, alternatively, judged their inadequacies. Healing came only when I was willing to look at these aspects of myself and take responsibility for them.

We can only heal what we acknowledge. Until we take responsibility for what we project on others, we keep our guilt hidden from ourselves. By withdrawing the projection, we reclaim it as something we willingly acknowledge in ourselves. Does that mean that everything we judge in others is an unhealed place in ourselves? Absolutely yes!

When we observe behavior without judgment, we are not projecting guilt. Nevertheless, when we compare ourselves as better than anyone, or hold a superior or even inferior position to them, we are assuming differences. Jesus invites us to recognize that we share the same need and the same purpose as our brother. He invites us to know the One Self, which we do by first recognizing our sameness. When we see others as guilty, we are saying that Jesus is wrong about who they are as pure and holy and that what we are seeing is right. We justify our anger and attack when we use what our senses show us as evidence of the sinful state of others. Our part is to take our judgments back to our own minds. This is the only place that real change can happen. Trying to change our brothers is just another form of attack.

When we judge the behavior of others, it is always something we reject about ourselves. We can't heal anything we deny in ourselves. **"The search for truth is but the honest searching out of everything that interferes with truth."** (T.14.VII.2.1) (ACIM OE T.14.IV.25) The truth is already in us. There is nowhere we must go to find it. All we need to do is bring everything that interferes with it to the Holy Spirit. Jesus does not ask us to do this on his behalf, but on behalf of our own happiness. It is the only way out of suffering. The trick is not to judge or crucify ourselves when we see our judgments. All we need to do is acknowledge them. To look at our mistaken perceptions without judgment is to look at them from outside of the dream with the "eyes" of love. From this vantage point, there is nothing we take seriously as it is all a dream.

Everything about this course is to be applied to how we live our lives. It is all ultimately practical. We can talk about the ideas in the Course for hours, but how will that help transform our lives? The important thing is to recognize that if I am feeling anything but the peace of God, I am experiencing the ego. If I make anything important other than the peace of God, it will hurt me. **"Anything in this world that you believe is good and valuable and worth striving for can hurt you, and will do so."** (T.26.VI.1.1) (ACIM OE T.26.VII.44)

It is interesting to see what shows up in my experience since it has become more and more apparent that what I hold in my mind appears as a reflection in the world. It is always an outside picture of my inward condition. Everything is a projection of the mind. We are not victims of the world. We draw forth the experiences that help us see the unhealed places in our minds. If we are experiencing issues of unworthiness, deceit, or dysfunction, we will draw witnesses to these aspects of ourselves. If we have issues of lack, greed, or neediness, these too will show up in our experience. There are no accidents. Yes, we can get very angry about the apparent injustice of what seems to be happening to us, but healing happens when we see it all starts in our own minds. This is a powerful thought if we are willing to accept it as fact. Jesus warns us to be beware of the temptation to see ourselves unfairly treated.

When we identify with the ego we reject responsibility for our condition because we prefer to be innocent victims of the seeming injustices of what others do to us. When our unhealed perspectives are kept hidden from awareness, no healing is possible. The only escape is to stay vigilant with what is going on around us, how we perceive these situations and events, and to be consistently willing to bring our false self-concepts to the Holy Spirit so space can be made for the miracle. How this happens is not up to us. We are only called to look openly at the dark hidden places in the mind with courage and honesty and bring them to the light. The truth of what we are lies behind these self-concepts and false beliefs. Holiness is our inheritance and awaits release of the blocks in the mind to shine forth.

Jesus asks us how we could possibly look on anything God created as if it could be made sinful. (W.263.1.2) Only in this dream, which is being dreamed by a madman, could anyone God created pure be seen as sinful. Remember that in our reading of **"What is Sin?"** (W.PII.Q4) Jesus spoke of the madman's dreams as being frightening and terrifying. That is our experience. How could what is joyful and eternal be turned to **"dark and fearful images"**? (W.263.1.3) It is what we

have done in our choice for the ego as our "friend," and we continue to make this choice every time we judge a brother as guilty and unworthy of our love.

Some years ago, Don purchased a toilet for our basement that I felt was much too expensive. I proposed that he use it for our upstairs bathroom, where the toilet also needed replacing, and buy something cheaper for the basement. He refused to discuss this option and refused to consider my suggestion. It became a battle of wills—both of us arguing for our respective positions. I asked for help to address my anger and judgment about feeling discounted. I needed a "timeout," so I went to the computer to listen to some teaching and was given exactly what I needed to hear. A woman was speaking about this kind of conflict in her life. She said that whenever she and her husband saw things differently, they sat down together, held hands, indicated a willingness to let go of their ideas about any situation they encountered and simply sat quietly and listened to what Spirit had to say about what to do. It is the willingness to let a position go and to join and ask within. I committed to focusing more on asking in everything, rather than using my own limited perspectives to make decisions. If we feel we need to decide something, it always means we are not clear on what to do. When we are clear, there is no need for a decision. It simply becomes obvious. And this can only be the case with the Holy Spirit, Who takes us beyond our own reasoning mind.

We are being asked today not only to see with Christ's vision but to pass by all appearances. (W.263.2.2) What does this mean? Apparently, in the Gospel of Thomas, which is discussed in Gary Renard's book "Disappearance of the Universe," there is a reference to becoming passersby, which apparently has the same meaning. It is basically not to get hooked in. This can be a challenge. When we come across dark and fearful images, which are things in this world that we give meaning to, the idea is to withdraw the meaning and the judgments that go with it and pass them by. It ties in with the question of purpose because if we get drawn into the distractions of the world, we are not passing them by. Our purpose becomes one of making the illusion real. When I find myself getting into an argument where I take the bait instead of remaining in a state of peace, or if I offer opinions where it would be more beneficial to my peace of mind simply to be still, then I am not passing them by. In these instances, I am choosing to throw away my peace and then blame someone for taking it from me. This is how we give away our power when we could choose to overlook the situation instead. The only reason we engage in such debates is to keep the separation going.

We were at an event some time ago at the ballpark. In the lounge, a buffet was available. Whoever chose to pay for it received an armband to signify they had bought a ticket. I noticed a group at an adjoining table where one person had the armband signifying they had paid for the buffet, but they were feeding five friends who had not paid. My condemning mind was very willing to be disturbed by this event. In that moment, I was not willing to **"look on all we see through holy vision and the eyes of Christ."** (263.2.1) I could not **"pass them by in innocence."** (263.2.2) and had all kinds of judgments about the morality of this situation. My mind was being pulled like a magnet to a crash scene, taking it all in. On reflection after the event, I noticed how much my mind wanted to make them wrong and to see their guilt. Clearly, by the rules of this world, they were not acting in integrity, but for me, it was my attraction to guilt which pulled me into this scene.

Today, we make a commitment to 1) see the inherent purity in all our brothers and 2) pass by the forms of the world, rather than getting hooked by our condemning thoughts. Our true identity is not the body. We are created in the image of God. We are being asked to consider deeply how we could possibly look at what God created as sinful. If we perceive anyone as sinful, dark, and fearful, it can only be because we are projecting our own guilt. God created all that is, and if it is not of love, it is not of Him. Thus, it can only come from a madman's dream, and we are the madman. Healing the dream allows us to see with holy vision.

"Could you but realize for a single instant the power of healing that the reflection of God, shining in you, can bring to all the world, you could not wait to make the mirror of your mind clean to receive the image of the holiness that heals the world."

(T.14.IX.7.1) (ACIM OE T.14. V.44) In these instants, we experience our holiness. For the rest of the time, we keep using whatever shows up in our day for only one purpose—to heal the mind of false perceptions of ourselves and thus everyone else.

Love and blessings, Sarah

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