

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 319 I came for the salvation of the world.

Sarah's Commentary:

Many times in this Course, we are told that it is arrogant to oppose the truth and accept the self that is limited and constrained by the body. The reality is we are magnificent unlimited beings of light and love. Only this unlimited Christ Self can bring salvation to the world. It cannot come from the mythical, limited self we think we are.

"Only the ego can be limited, and therefore it must seek for aims which are curtailed and limiting." (W.319.1.4) Because we think we are curtailed and limited we set goals that are limited and self-serving. We try to achieve these goals, but it is always at the expense of our brothers. **"For specialness not only sets apart, but serves as grounds from which attack on those who seem 'beneath' the special one is 'natural' and 'just'."** (T.24.I.4.4) (ACIM OE T.24.II.6) To the ego, it is a game of competition based on the principle of "one or the other." You must lose, for me to win. It is based on the belief that we won our individual and separate self at God's expense. In other words, we had to "kill" God. Oneness can't exist as long as we believe we exist as a separate self. Thus, our gain as a separate self came at the expense of totality. To gain this world of separation and duality, we had to destroy Oneness/God. This is what seemed to happen in the original instant—the tiny mad idea when the choice was made for the ego thought system. Of course, we are told this never could happen except in dreams. The Atonement Principle assures us that it could not and has not happened even if we currently still believe in our individual existence.

Our identification with the ego—the limited self, can never bring salvation to the world. So, if we think we are doing good through our service to the world, it does nothing when driven by ego goals. Salvation can only come from the truth of who I am as the unified Self. Thus, the salvation of the world can only come through the Christ Self—the truth of what we are. It requires a deep level of surrender of all that we believe about ourselves, others, and the world.

In the thought system of the ego, we hold the belief that totality must lose for us to gain, but through healing, we come to the realization we have been mistaken about who we are. No one loses and everyone gains. Salvation rests on the fact that we must all gain if we are to know the Self we are. **"Would it be possible for you to hate your brother if you were like him? Could you attack him if you realized you journey with him to a goal that is the same. Would you not help him reach it in every way you could, if his attainment of it were perceived as yours? You are his enemy in specialness; his friend in a shared purpose. Specialness can never share, for it depends on goals that you alone can reach. And he must never reach them, or your goal is jeopardized. Can love have meaning where the goal is triumph? And what decision can be made for this that**

will not hurt you?" (T.24.I.6.1-8) (ACIM OE T.24.II.8) As we come to recognize we are the same, the Oneness of Heaven is reflected.

God is the Author of reality, and as such, His Will embraces all there is. **"And the goal which stems from it shares its totality."** (W.319.2.2) In other words, a separate self cannot exist. We are part of the totality, dreaming we are separate. **"What aim but the salvation of the world could You have given me?"** (W.319.2.3) What else is there to learn from our experience in this world except to realize, we are mistaken in our belief in separate goals. It is by remembering our purpose and our function, to bring salvation to the world and to awaken from this dream through forgiveness, that we come to know the Self we are. All our experiences in the world can serve the purpose of bringing salvation to the world. It is when the veil is lifted, and we see Christ in our brother and accept the truth about ourselves that we are saved, and the world is saved along with us. It is not a statement of arrogance because it is not what we do, but what we are.

We read the same thing in Lesson 186: **"Salvation of the world depends on me."** (W.186) **"Here is the statement that will one day take all arrogance away from every mind. Here is the thought of true humility, which holds no function as your own but that which has been given you. It offers your acceptance of a part assigned to you, without insisting on another role."** (W.186.1.1-3) To insist we know better than God is the real definition of arrogance. To accept God's Word as to who we really are is to be humble. We release the "I know" mind and admit we have been wrong in thinking our separate identity and unique self is who we are. We give up the beliefs, values, and concepts we hold that we are unworthy, bad, limited, and lacking. We accept the truth about ourselves as limitless by recognizing we can never gain at the expense of our brother. We recognize that when we make comparisons, find fault with others, or see ourselves as superior, we maintain the belief that gain comes through competition and winning at the expense of others. It is the thought system of "one or the other" that is held in the mind and originated with our competition with God.

Yesterday, I was upset about a situation where I felt set up and abused. I believed this upset was because of something that happened, but that was just my story. Anything that follows "because" is part of the justification for our upsets. The truth is that I was upset because it is what I wanted. So, one may wonder, why would any of us want to be upset? Jesus explains that we choose to be upset because we want to be right about the way we see our world. I want to be right about my reasons for the upset, and I tell my story because I want others to agree with me. To drop the story, and to admit that I am wrong in the way I see this situation seems like an affront to my perception and understanding.

This is why it is so challenging for us to admit we are always wrong in our perceptions. Now we are called to turn to the Holy Spirit and to ask for His interpretation in everything. I have given meaning to an event that has no meaning. It is neutral. Everything in the world is neutral. However, we give it meaning and, in the process, throw away our happiness, which is our birthright. We would rather be right than happy. We prefer our way and defend our thoughts because truth threatens our individuality and our specialness. Now we are called to see how mistaken we are about who we really are.

When we experience any irritation or feelings of impatience or superiority or compare ourselves with anyone it is because we want to be separate. Yet it is important not to judge ourselves when we become aware of the ego program. We are cautioned not to condemn ourselves for not being

more spiritual. That simply can never work because, whether we judge ourselves or anyone else, it is all the same. It keeps us at the mercy of the judgmental ego. All we need do is to look, without condemnation, at our beliefs and judgments and be willing to see we are wrong and to put our misperceptions on the altar within. We can't heal ourselves. All we can do is bring our thoughts and beliefs to awareness. Our willingness is what brings the power of the Holy Spirit to every situation we encounter.

Some blocks seem so subtle that we do not notice them. Yet these seemingly small irritations can build up during the day until we feel depressed or angry, and wonder why. That is why it is important to pay attention to what is going on in the mind, rather than giving all our attention to what is going on outside of us. Judging and criticizing others will never be helpful to our awakening, but when we are willing to look at our judgments honestly and courageously without judging ourselves, we are taking a step in healing. It requires a level of alertness to our thoughts we are not used to, which is why mind-training is so important. Jesus reminds us that whenever we forget our purpose, **"will the world remind you gently of what you have taught."** (T.27.V.7.2) (ACIM OE T.27.VI.49) There are many witnesses to what is going on in our minds. They provide us a perfect mirror as a reflection of our thoughts and beliefs.

In an article by Jon Mundy, he writes that what brings us sorrow is when we try to force things to happen the way we think we want. For the mystic, nothing must happen. **"Recognize what does not matter, and if your brothers ask you for something 'outrageous,' do it because it does not matter."** (T.12.III.4.1) (ACIM OE T.11.IV.27) I notice how much suffering I bring into my life when I make something matter. Jon reminded me in his article, that we can discover new freedom when we let our rules go of how we think things should be and simply accept what is. He wrote that when we say "whatever," it simply means it does not matter. It means that it is truly not important. When we get this, we can let go of being offended, disappointed, or upset by what someone has done.

We are the light of the world. We are to be happy. Happiness is our function. We bring joy by our very Being when we make space for truth. **"But when there is no arrogance the truth will come immediately, and fill up the space the ego left unoccupied by lies."** (W.319.1.3) As we willingly bring the darkness to the light and look to the truth beyond, we experience trust and confidence and grow in power and freedom. It is a matter of reclaiming our projections and recognizing what does not matter.

"Who is the light of the world except God's Son? This, then, is merely a statement of the truth about yourself. It is the opposite of a statement of pride, of arrogance, or of self-deception. It does not describe the self-concept you have made. It does not refer to any of the characteristics with which you have endowed your idols. It refers to you as you were created by God. It simply states the truth." (W.61.1.1-7)

We have made a commitment to healing and to remember who we are. It is what we are committed to do through this Course. Let's recommit today to affirm this aim for ourselves so we can strengthen our resolve and our motivation. We do grow weary and become resistant from time to time, but we are not asked to force ourselves. In fact, it is not helpful to do so. When discouragement and resistance are high, it may be time to relax and take a break. When we are ready to recommit, we are renewed and strengthened, and our confidence grows.

Love and blessings, Sarah

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