

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 337

My sinlessness protects me from all harm.

Sarah's Commentary:

When Jesus talks about accepting the Atonement, he is talking about accepting our innocence, which is accepting the Self as Christ. To do so requires that we accept the Correction for our mistaken perceptions and be willing to accept healing, so we can know we have never changed the Self we are. God created us as perfect eternal beings of light and love. To accept this for ourselves, we need to be willing to look at the way we block this truth. Forgiveness is about bringing to light the blocks we hold against the truth and how we defend ourselves. This takes willingness and great vigilance in watching our thoughts. To **"Be vigilant only for God and His Kingdom"** (T.6.C.2.8) (ACIM OE T.6.c.85) is a **"major step toward fundamental change."** (T.6.C.3.1) (ACIM OE T.6.c.86)

We spend a lot of our lives looking for love, looking for happiness, and trying to find peace and contentment. Jesus says, **"And only happiness can be my state, for only happiness is given to me."** (W.337.1.2) Yet the reality is we don't feel happy consistently. Why? **"What must I do to know all this is mine?"** (W.337.1.3) Jesus says there is nothing to be done. **"I must accept Atonement for myself, and nothing more. God has already done all things that need be done."** (W.337.1.4-5) Therefore, with the help of the Holy Spirit, our job is to undo all that is not true. It is to look past appearances and to recognize that anything not of love and joy has no power to hurt us or anyone else.

In **"The Greater Joining"**, Jesus says, **"Accepting the Atonement for yourself means not to give support to someone's dream of sickness and of death. It means that you share not his wish to separate, and let him turn illusions on himself. Nor do you wish that they be turned, instead, on you. Thus have they no effects. And you are free of dreams of pain because you let him be [free of dreams of pain]. Unless you help him, you will suffer pain with him because that is your wish. And you become a figure in his dream of pain, as he is yours. So do you and your brother both become illusions, and without identity."** (T.28.IV.1.1-8) (ACIM OE T.28.V.37)

When we acknowledge Oneness with our brother, we are both set free. We do that by recognizing we are the same. It is not to suffer with him or join with him in his pain, but to recognize his innocence, which is to recognize our own. This means that all judgments we have about him must be given over to the Holy Spirit. We must not see ourselves as a dream figure in his story of pain, sickness, or suffering and join him there in a show of false empathy. Instead, it is about coming to know who we are and to know our brother's reality as we were created. We can only know the truth when we bring all the judgments, comparisons, and specialness to the Holy Spirit and ask for His interpretation.

I may wonder, "Why don't I feel happy all the time if happiness is already given me, and I need do nothing? Since there is nothing to seek, but only my reality as Love to accept, how is this accomplished?" The answer is to accept who I am in truth. What keeps us from the truth is our denial and defenses, our belief that we are what *we* have made of ourselves, and ultimately, our fear of God. We hold onto the image—the self-concept we have made of ourselves. We don't trust God because we have made an image of Him that equates Him with death. We hold the belief that He wants to wrest from us our will and demand sacrifice of us, but it is an image of God made by the ego and not what God is.

What must be undone before we can know ourselves as God created us? How did we get so mistaken about ourselves that we think we have become something we are not? How have we become so insecure that we experience life as suffering and turmoil? Why does it seem that we must spend our lives seeking for happiness that always seems to elude us? Jesus tells us there is nothing to seek. What we need to see is how we actively deny, defend, and negate our happiness and actually protect ourselves from our reality as Beings of light and love. We are pure joy, but we defend against it. How we do that is by distracting ourselves, seeking things in the world we think will make us happy, making plans for our own salvation, and keeping our minds actively pursuing, judging, attacking, feeling guilty, fearful, angry, and all that keeps us defended against the love we are. Because of our fear of the Self we are, we cling to the image of ourselves we have made.

That is why forgiveness is so central to the Course teachings. Through forgiveness we recognize the other person is as sinless as ourselves and we join in the sameness that we are. We see beyond the behaviors and respond to the call for love with love. We do not respond to the demands and manipulations of another as if it were something to fix or solve. Instead, we respond to the real problem, which is a cry from our brothers to be seen and understood as innocent, despite what their behavior might look like. This is how we come to know our own innocence.

To accept the Atonement for ourselves is important because it is the acceptance of right-mindedness, which is a moment of sanity, even if only briefly. This leads directly and automatically to extending healing to others. "Accepting healing is the precondition for extending healing, for you must have before you can give." (Course glossary). **"The only way to heal is to be healed. The miracle extends without your help, but you are needed that it can begin. Accept the miracle of healing, and it will go forth because of what it is. It is its nature to extend itself the instant it is born. And it is born the instant it is offered and received."** (T.27.V.1.1-5) (ACIM OE T.27.VI.44) This is why contemplation of the Lessons and taking time for meditation practice are important to healing. We must take responsibility for all the judgments and attacks we project on others. Only by taking responsibility for our attacks and bringing them to the light can healing take place.

The miracle is the expression of the Atonement. **"The miracle does nothing. All it does is to undo. And thus it cancels out the interference to what has been done. It does not add, but merely takes away."** (T.28.I.1) (ACIM OE T.In.28.I.1) While we might think of the miracle as something amazing and dramatic, all the miracle does is bring our mind back to the truth by helping us recognize that the way we see things now is not the truth. Therefore, the miracle restores what always was. It brings the problem to the Answer and solves the problem where it really is, which is in the mind. Our only problem is that we cling to an ancient memory of sin and guilt. The miracle clears away these old memories. It helps clear our link to the past. It does not mean we don't address problems that show up in our lives, but we recognize that they

will never be solved in the world, never to return. The only real solution is in the mind. When I am sick, the first thing I want to do is run to the medicine cabinet to find a solution; but the problem is the guilt in the mind and running to the medicine cabinet cannot solve the real problem. It does not make taking medicine wrong, but to address the real problem, we are encouraged to go to Spirit first. When we do, we become willing to go to the source of the problem that is in the mind, which is the only place real healing can happen.

The focus of this whole Course is on miracles, which is the attainment of peace, and not on what the Course calls Knowledge or a sustained experience of the mystical. We may be tempted to put all our focus on wanting such experiences. Yet Jesus clearly puts the focus on doing the work of reversing the way we currently think by reversing cause and effect. Knowledge is beyond the goal of the Course. While mystical experiences are motivating, they are not our focus. Our focus is on moving up the ladder of separation to the truth by undoing all that stands in the way.

As we come to recognize ourselves by accepting the Atonement, we recognize our purity and our invulnerability. If we think we can be harmed in any way, we have forgotten who we are. We have forgotten our identity as eternal beings, and we are dreaming that we are something else. Through forgiveness and joining with another, rather than building defenses, we let go of the dream of separation.

Today is a day to commit to healing our minds, bringing anything that stands between us and our brothers and sisters to the Holy Spirit and asking for His help so we can know the truth.

"You Who created me in sinlessness are not mistaken about what I am. I was mistaken when I thought I sinned, but I accept Atonement for myself. Father, my dream is ended now. Amen." (W.337.2.1-3)

What must be undone before we can know ourselves as God created us? How did we get so mistaken about ourselves that we think we have become something we are not? How have we become so insecure that we experience life as suffering and turmoil? Why does it seem that we must spend our lives seeking for happiness that always seems to elude us? Yet there is nothing to seek because we already are what we are seeking.

What we need to see is how we actively deny, defend, and negate our happiness and actually protect ourselves from our reality as Beings of light and love. We are pure joy, pure innocence, unlimited, but we defend against our reality. In other words we overlook what we are by identifying with what we are not.

How we do that is by distracting ourselves, seeking things in the world we think will make us happy, making plans for our own salvation, and keeping our minds actively pursuing, judging, attacking, feeling guilty, fearful, angry, and all that keeps us defended against the love we are. Because of our fear of the love we are, we cling to and defend the image of ourselves we have made.

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behaviors and respond to the call for love with love. We do not respond to the demands and manipulations of another as if it were something to fix or solve. Instead, we respond to the real problem, which is a cry for love from our brothers that we may see them as they are as innocent, despite what their behavior might look like. This is how we come to know our own innocence and that we have never changed ourselves as we were created by God.

Love and blessings, Sarah

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