



LESSON 129

Beyond this world there is a world I want.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson presents us with a choice between the world we see and a better alternative. Jesus describes the world we see as merciless, unstable, cruel, unconcerned with us, with no lasting love, and with no certainty. It is a place where all things end, a place which is ". . . **quick to avenge and pitiless with hate.**" (W.129.2.3) How readily do you agree with this statement? Certainly, we can agree that all things end. Perhaps what is most cruel is that the world is a transitory place, but Jesus reminds us today, there is another choice to be made. He leaves us with the assurance that there is something else available for us beyond this hopeless world. He says that we need more than just the idea that the world is worthless. We need hope for a better alternative. Otherwise, it would leave us depressed, with no hope for something better.

The alternative is the real world. "**Is it a loss to find a world instead where losing is impossible; where love endures forever, hate cannot exist and vengeance has no meaning.**" (W.129.3.1) This is the real world, as described in the Course. It is not a place but a state of mind revealed to us through forgiveness. When we no longer listen to the voice of the ego and hear only the Holy Spirit, the love we are is reflected back to us and seen everywhere. Love is experienced when the thought system of sin, guilt, and fear that brought us to the world is healed. Now, we are in a world of joy and peace. "**Yet even they [the gifts of the real world] will be exchanged at last for what we cannot speak of, [Heaven] for you go from there to where words fail entirely, into a silence where the language is unspoken and yet surely understood.**" (W.129.3.3) This is a place of direct knowledge and is beyond the real world. Thus, the Lesson covers the three worlds: the ego's world of loss, hate, vengeance, suffering and death; the real world, which reflects Heaven's love and is the bridge to Heaven; and Heaven itself, where God takes the last step and lifts us up.

This world of separation can never make us happy, and whatever happiness we think we can find in it is only transitory. Oh yes, we might argue that there are lovely things in this world, things to enjoy, beautiful sunsets, mountains, lakes, and flowers, but they are still all subject to time. This Lesson helps us to recognize that the things of this world fall so very short of what is given in the real world, and somewhere in our minds, we know that this is so. If we choose to see this world as wonderful, at some level there is a denial of the guilt in the mind because the nature of the world we see is not lovely. It is a world of beauty but also of murder, torture, war, famine, disease, and death. Yet when the guilt in our minds is brought up for healing, joy and beauty are indeed reflected everywhere. This happens not in the world but only in the mind. It becomes an outside reflection of our inner, healed condition, where there is no more guilt. Please don't think this all has to come at some time in the future, which was a mistake I made for a long time. The decision for Heaven is made in each moment. There is no linear time, so our salvation is now with each decision we make. Heaven is here now.

The real world is a much more valuable option than the most wonderful things in the world that we currently experience. We must be honest and ask ourselves if we really believe that the world we see can offer us nothing but joy and peace. (W.129.1.4) Clearly, this is not a world where "... **love endures forever, hate cannot exist and vengeance has no meaning.**" (W.129.3.1) We see loss, vengeance, and death every day. That is the nature of this world of guilt and fear, but it is not the truth. When we say that we want joy and peace but want the things of this world as well, we are not being entirely honest with ourselves. Instead, we need to see how much we don't want joy and peace and how much we substitute the things of this world in the place of what we say we want.

We still hold onto some hope that we might find something of value in the world. We think there is something here still worth striving for. For us, to give up the hope of finding value in the world may feel like a loss. Jesus anticipates this when he says, "**What loss can be for you in choosing not to value nothingness?**" (W.129.6.2) In truth, there is nothing here we really want. Our real heart's desire lies beyond the things of this world. All we need to do is to realize this. It awaits our choice. As we read yesterday, Jesus is not saying we must refuse pleasure and resist temptation no matter how appealing it looks to us right now. Instead, he is reminding us that our happiness can never be found in the things of this world. He asks us again to be very honest about this and realize, "**This world holds nothing that you really want, but what you choose instead you want indeed!**" (W.129.6.3) Then, he urges us not to delay and reminds us that it is all about our choice for what is important to us. When we seek things that we still think we want in the world, we are delaying this decision. Jesus is urging us not to delay on behalf of our own happiness. He reminds us that all we are sacrificing when we give up the pleasures of this world is our own pain. "**Is it a sacrifice to give up pain? Does an adult resent the giving up of children's toys?**" (Manual for Teachers.13.4.2-3)

There is something even more satisfying awaiting us than the things of this world. The possibility of finding the changeless and eternal is not about anything physical. It is really about connecting with Oneness or Love. We are here to find and experience the eternal. We are slowly learning to let go of our investment in the changeable, and instead, we are learning to value that which is changeless. When we ask for guidance, listen, and follow him, we get a sense of the real world that Jesus speaks about.

"Here is the world that comes to take its place, as you unbind your mind from little things the world sets forth to keep you prisoner." (W.129.5.3) Of course, in our minds, we don't always see things in the world as little things. These are often what we think of as big and important things that we value. "**Value them not, and they will disappear. Esteem them, and they will seem real to you.**" (W.129.5.4-5) The world we see is a reflection of the thought system of the ego. This is a thought system based on guilt and fear and projected out onto the world, so how could we expect anything else reflected back to us except what is projected out? There truly is no world. It is just a massive defense system against the guilt and fear in our minds. It keeps us from seeing that we have a choice and can, indeed, dismiss the ego. When we see that God's love holds more value for us than the ego's fear-based specialness of separation and individuality, we will make this choice; and this is when we come to the crossroads in our lives and admit that the life we have lived does not nurture us in a deep way.

As long as we still fear God's love, we will defend against it. The world has been made as a place where we can hide from the punishment we fear God has in store for us. The ego has convinced us that we have sinned against God and that we are guilty of destroying our home in Heaven. The world was made to exclude God and to protect the thought that God's love was not enough. We wanted more. We wanted specialness, uniqueness, and our individuality. Since He can't give us more than everything, we decided to be our own god instead and make a world for ourselves in

which we could get everything we think we want. This was the ego's promise to us. What it did not tell us is that the pain we experience as a result of the separation from God is part of its package.

We came to believe that we don't need God anymore. This thought engenders so much guilt. Now we are terrified that God will destroy us, and so, the ego gave us the answer for our guilt. The ego's answer was to make up a world and make up a body where we could hide. Jesus says that we think we made a place of safety for ourselves and a power that we think could save us from all the fearful things we see in dreams, (M.16.6.3-4) yet it is a place that teaches only despair. "**Everyone who follows the world's curriculum, and everyone here does follow it until he changes his mind, teaches solely to convince himself that he is what he is not. Herein is the purpose of the world. What else, then, would its curriculum be? Into this hopeless and closed learning situation, which teaches nothing but despair and death, God sends His teachers. And as they teach His lessons of joy and hope, their learning finally becomes complete.**" (M.IN.4.4-8)

We have the power and are given the help to change our minds about where our safety and protection really lie. They do not lie in the world. The things we think will protect us and bring us pleasure in the world ultimately fail to deliver. We already know this is true when we look honestly at the outcomes of our lives for ourselves. We have a false sense of safety when we take our vitamins, lock our doors, take out insurance policies, count on enduring relationships, and rely on our bank accounts. They are all illusions of safety and protection, and they all, ultimately, fail us because they can never protect us from the pain of our own guilt. Jesus asks us, "**Think a while about what the world calls sacrifice. Power, fame, money, physical pleasure; who is the 'hero' to whom all these things belong? Could they mean anything except to a body?**" (M.13.2.5-6) They keep us prisoner to the world. "**Value them not, and they will disappear. Esteem them, and they will seem real to you.**" (W.129.5.4-5) Again, we are not asked to give up what we still value. That would seem like a sacrifice, and sacrifice is not asked of us. Jesus is only urging us to see the choice available to us and to see the nothingness of what the ego offers us, recognizing that there is only pain in pursuing what will never deliver joy and peace to us.

What makes the world lovely, though, is when we shift our purpose and no longer look at the world and body as a place to hide but as a classroom in which we learn to look at what we don't want to look at (guilt) in ourselves. The people, events, and situations we encounter in our day allow us to get in touch with our unconscious guilt by mirroring for us what is in our minds that we don't otherwise readily see. These unconscious beliefs rule our lives, yet we are unaware of the program running in the background of our conscious minds. Healing can only occur when we are willing to look at the darkness with the light that Jesus holds for us as he goes through the darkness with us. We need not go alone. He does not judge what we see and asks us not to judge ourselves for our dark thoughts. When we use the world and our relationships, which are filled with specialness, need, lack, expectations, hate, judgment, and pain as the curriculum and use Jesus as the teacher, we have a hope of achieving the real world, which shines bright with peace and joy.

I have been telling Don lately about someone we see from time to time on a news program that I don't like. The Holy Spirit prompted me to write down what it is I see in her that brings about the judgments. The words I wrote were: know it all, controlling, impatient, not listening, and superior. Clearly, I was seeing the false self, the persona of Sarah that I willingly give over to Spirit. There is no need for self-judgment but only for appreciation for the mind that is willing to acknowledge that which blocks the truth. We are always only seeing our own mind reflected back to us since nothing is outside of the mind.

Our purpose today is to decide for what we really want by practicing willingness. Take ten minutes, three times today, to affirm, "***Beyond this world there is a world I want. I choose to see that world instead of this, for here is nothing that I really want,***" (W.129.7.3-4) but don't let this thought escape you throughout the day.

To give up this world is to give up nothing while gaining everything. It means that we let go of upsets as they arise during the day. If we let go of the small upsets as they arise and stay vigilant throughout the day, then when the seemingly big disturbances show up, our daily practice will put us in good stead. By giving up our judgments and grievances as they arise, the day proceeds more smoothly. When we give up planning for all the perceived needs we think we have, we increasingly learn to trust and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As we look at things in the world that we cherish and withdraw the value we have placed on them, we learn that they don't define us.

Feel the confidence the Holy Spirit has in you today. "**Tell Him you know you cannot fail because you trust in Him. And tell yourself you wait in certainty to look upon the world He promised you. From this time forth you will see differently.**" (W.75.8.1-3)

Try to get in touch with your desire to see a world of meaning. This world is totally harmless, peaceful, benign, and loving, without a trace of pain or loss. Visualize the lights of Heaven shining on your eyelids as you rest beyond the world of darkness; it is a light your eyes cannot behold, but your mind can see plainly. Today is a day of grace.

Whenever you become aware of thoughts of judgment, specialness, or attack, bring them to the Holy Spirit and recognize that you can look at any situation with Him and know peace today instead of pain. To keep ego thoughts is to defend against the purpose of forgiveness and awakening from this dream. Ask yourself if you want to use this situation, this event, or this problem to stay invested in the illusion or awaken to who you are.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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