



LESSON 74

There is no will but God's.

Sarah's Commentary:

If there is no will but God's, nothing can be in opposition to God. There is only God. There is only one will. We share this will with God. There can be no separate self with a will separate from God. It simply does not exist. This separate will that seems to identify us is a dream figure in a world that is not real. We took the tiny mad idea seriously that we could separate from God. **"Into eternity, where all is one, there crept a tiny, mad idea, at which the Son of God remembered not to laugh."** (T.27.VIII.6.2) (ACIM OE T.27.IX.82) Thus, we seemed to establish a separate reality as these autonomous individuals we call ourselves, living in a world we believe is real. Yet Jesus tells us, **"God's Son can smile at last, on learning that it is not true."** (W.153.14.6)

The word "indivi-dual" reflects duality. It reflects a duality of a "me" and God. It makes us the authors of our own lives as individuals who have our own thoughts that are in opposition to God. The ego is simply the idea that there is a will opposite to God's. Unless we give our allegiance to this idea, it has no reality. We believe we have made ourselves, and now we are on our own, separate from God, yet nothing real has happened. That is the essence of the Atonement Principle, which is the central thought of this Course. This principle says we can't separate from God; we are still one with Him. We remain the divine eternal beings we were created to be. All we have lost is our awareness of that fact. What we need to do is to accept the Atonement (correction) for ourselves, which means we must finally, in the end, come to accept the truth about ourselves. That is why Jesus says, **"The idea for today can be regarded as the central thought toward which all our exercises are directed."** (W.74.1.1)

With that tiny mad idea, when we made the choice for the ego and thus seemed to separate from creation, we thought we did something terrible by stealing our identity from God. If indeed we overcame God, He must be seen as our enemy. The ego tells us that God wants back what we stole from Him. It says we have committed a terrible sin in leaving God, and now our minds are full of guilt over our "wrong doing." We fear we will be punished for what we did. We project the guilt out, first by making up an angry God, who we now think is seeking to punish us for what we did, and then by making up a world where we can project the horrific guilt we hold in our minds.

Now there is conflict between ourselves and our image of an angry God, who we believe is seeking retribution and vengeance on us. This conflict is repressed, but it is in our minds and is what we project onto the world, where we now see conflict all around us. To release ourselves from the guilt in our minds, we find others to blame for our condition. This results in a world where we are constantly in a state of attack and defense. If we look at our relationships, we can see this ongoing conflict, whether with our so-called enemies or those we think we love.

In truth, there can be no conflict. Our reality is eternal mind, and mind has no form and no boundaries against which there can be any friction. There is only Oneness. Conflict can only seem real in the illusion. The people in the world with whom we have conflict are just figures in the dream we are dreaming. Thus, we are only in conflict with ourselves. It is an outward picture we are seeing of our own inward condition. **"It is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition."** (T.21.IN.1.5) (ACIM OE T.21.I.1) We are now being called to make another choice. We can choose peace, but first, we must take responsibility for our attacks. We need to see that they all start with us. The ego will protest, of course, because the ego has separated cause from effect. Now we see ourselves as an effect of what the world is doing to us, forgetting that our own mind is the cause of what we see.

We blame situations in our lives as the cause of our distress. For example, childhood abuse may now be seen as the cause of anger and lack of intimacy. Our stories are all about what others have done to us to cause our unhappiness. Jesus tells us that when we separate cause from effect, we can't be healed. We must bring the cause, which is the guilt in our minds, to the Holy Spirit, also in our minds. Now we have brought cause and effect together and healing happens. We do this by taking responsibility for everything that seems to have happened and recognize we are projecting our own guilt onto others. Reversing cause and effect is a pretty clever device of the ego to convince us that we are the victims of attacks, coming at us from the world and not from our own minds! When we are ready to see how all this was set up by the ego, there is a realization that we are given a way out of this never-ending cycle of guilt and fear. Help is available to us in own minds through the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

We hold many goals that seem to be in conflict. It is reminiscent of the Lesson where Jesus asked us to look at the many conflicting goals we have for difficult situations in our lives. We need to question how we could ever want something different than what God wants if there is no Will but God's? It really couldn't be possible unless illusions are involved in our dream of separation from God. The only conflict there can be is in my own thoughts. Through the process of forgiveness, we recognize that nothing can disturb us because God's Will for us is perfect peace, and God's Will is all there is. Everything but this, we have made up, and if we have made it up, we can choose to see it differently. Peace comes from accepting the idea that we never left God, and what we are experiencing in the illusion is not the truth. Until we recognize this is so, we continue to play out this idea of separation, which we do again and again with each grievance we hold and each judgment we make.

Our state is one of non-dualism. If we believe this idea is "wholly true," we will be motivated to bring all our conflicts to the light of truth. This means that when we are upset or in conflict with anyone, or feel distressed or unhappy about anything, we look at how we believe the cause is outside ourselves and brought about by someone or something outside our own minds. This is an opportunity to look at the ego thought system at the root of our upset. When we take our conflict to the Holy Spirit, Who is in our minds as the symbol of God's Will, He reminds us that the truth about ourselves can only be, **"I am at peace. Nothing can disturb me. My will is God's. My will and God's are one. God wills peace for His Son."** (W.74.3.5-9) This place of innocence, free of conflict, is currently still in our minds, never having left us nor can we leave it. We can become totally unaware of this place until we have accepted the Atonement for ourselves, which is the goal of the whole Course.

I am looking at what is disturbing me today. There are thoughts of what I think I need to get accomplished; plans I have for next week come to mind, as well as a grievance with my partner about the pressure he seems to be putting on me to do something I don't want to do. Unresolved issues spring forward. I wonder how I can contribute to resolving them. Worry thoughts spring

forward. Sadness shows up. There are many things that seem to disturb us, but the remedy for them all is in our own minds. We are called to step back from them all and recognize there is no value in holding onto these thoughts. We live a life of constant disturbance as a result of our turbulent thoughts. It is truly not about the world but all about our interpretations of everything around us and the meaning we give to neutral events.

Being vigilant in watching these thoughts and being willing to bring them to the light of truth is how they are healed. "**During this introductory phase, be sure to deal quickly with any conflict thoughts that may cross your mind. Tell yourself immediately: There is no will but God's. These conflict thoughts are meaningless.**" (W.74.3.10-13) Our motivation in bringing our upsetting thoughts to Him is to know our innocence, peace, and happiness. It is certainly not about denying how we feel. On the contrary, we are encouraged to stay very vigilant with what we are feeling and thinking so we can find our thoughts of conflict and single them out "**for special consideration.**" (W.74.4.1) In other words, we don't deny our emotions or the thoughts and beliefs connected to them, but we bring them forward and recognize that the cause is in our own minds, and now we are called to give over our false beliefs to the Holy Spirit for healing.

Our reality is the awareness beyond all thought. It is like the ocean. Our thoughts are the debris that floats in the ocean, but the ocean does not wonder what it is, nor does it think it is no longer an ocean, because there is debris floating around in it. When we hold thoughts of guilt and conflict in our minds, our minds are actually blank. "**Recognizing that your mind has been merely blank, rather than believing that it is filled with real ideas, is the first step to opening the way to vision.**" (W.8.3.3) The awareness behind thoughts is that which observes thoughts from outside of this dream. From this place of observation, we bring awareness to thoughts. There is no judgment when we look through the eyes of the Holy Spirit, meaning we are looking with love and acceptance rather than judgment. The ocean does not judge the debris floating on its surface as "bad."

This acceptance, without judgment, brings healing. Thoughts come and go, but that which is witnessing the thoughts remains. You are the witness. You are not your personality, your beliefs, your feelings, nor your self-concepts. You are the observer of all of that and as such, you can step aside from your thoughts. No, this is not about denial. This is about feeling what you are feeling and then taking the next step, which is to be willing to let your feelings go. It is not about judging them or feeling guilty about having thoughts of anger, fear, or distress of any kind. It is only about recognizing that we can't heal what we don't acknowledge or what we refuse to take responsibility for.

Jesus reminds us, "**The war against yourself is but the battle of two illusions, struggling to make them different from each other, in the belief the one that conquers will be true. There is no conflict between them and the truth.**" (T.23.I.6.1-2) (ACIM OE T.23.II.12) "**Illusions cannot triumph over truth, nor can they threaten it in any way.**" (T.23.I.6.8) (ACIM OE T.23.II.12) When there are two conflicting thought systems in the mind, it is called cognitive dissonance. This means that we try to live with two contradictory thought systems at the same time, which gives rise to immense anxiety and frustration that we try to resolve as best we can. The answer is to get aligned with the thought system of the Atonement, and recognize there is only one will --the Will of God, which is our own.

Peace is available in us when the conflict in the mind is released, yet we note that for many of us when we start on this path, we experience all kinds of resistance. It may show up as withdrawal, drowsiness, desire for distraction, or anger. Some have even burned the book. All of it reflects the

fear in our minds. We fear losing the identity of the separate self. Jesus is helping us see through the threat we feel in the presence of God's love. He understands our resistance and is very gentle with us, reminding us of the happy outcome to us when we choose to release our false perceptions. He reminds us that we are in charge of this journey and will not be hurled into an experience for which we are not ready. He does not want to induce more fear in us, but he wants only to bring further awareness of the resistance in our minds and for us to see how much we are in denial. He wants only to encourage us and gives us a remedy when we are inclined to withdraw by saying, **"If you feel yourself slipping off into withdrawal, quickly repeat the idea for today and try again."** (W.74.6.3) And we keep doing **"this as often as necessary."** (W.74.6.4)

Letting go of control is essential if we are to come to peace. Control comes from fear, and it is our way of holding onto the false self. To return to our natural state as God created us, we continually need to let go of our way, which is to let go of the mind that thinks it knows. **"When you are taught against your nature, however, you will lose by your learning because your learning will imprison you."** (T.8.II.2.8) (ACIM OE T.8.III.9) Our natural state is what might be called enlightenment or awakening. What we have taught ourselves is unnatural in that it has imprisoned our true nature and keeps us from free expression. It maintains our roles and our conditioning and keeps us tied to the illusion. We have worked hard to adjust to the world, but it is not a state of true freedom. To free ourselves, it is essential that we look at our false beliefs and let these beliefs be brought to truth.

"Peace is the state where love abides, and seeks to share itself. Conflict and peace are opposites. Where one abides the other cannot be; where either goes the other disappears. So is the memory of God obscured in minds that have become illusions' battleground." (T.23.I.12.5-8) (ACIM OE T.23.II.18)

"Why would you fill your world with conflicts with yourself? Let all this madness be undone for you, and turn in peace to the remembrance of God, still shining in your quiet mind." (T.23.I.8.8-9) (ACIM OE T.23.II.14)

Sometimes, we think this is all so hard to get. A friend was sharing about something his young son, a six-year-old, said to him. This young boy told his father there is a voice in his head that tells him all the things he needs and wants. Yet another Voice, which is much quieter inside himself, reminds him that God and His Love is all he really needs and all that is important. As long as he stays connected with this Voice, he will always feel safe and secure, and that is the only thing that is important.

Out of the mouth of babes! We all have the truth in us. We all have this Voice within. We can choose to ignore it or access it. If our goal is peace, we have been given the means to attain it. It is up to us whether we embrace it or push God away.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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