



## LESSON 171

### Review V ~ Lesson 151 and Lesson 152

#### Sarah's Commentary:

**[151] All things are echoes of the Voice of God.**

**[152] The power of decision is my own.**

The Reviews don't give us much now except the introduction and a few lines each day; so, it is important to look at what Jesus is instructing us to do in this Review. He starts by urging us to now give more effort and more time to the Lessons. He wants us to take this seriously, since maintaining the ego has cost us our happiness.

In our practice instructions laid out in Lesson 153, we were asked to give at least five minutes. "**Ten would be better; fifteen better still.**" (W.153.15.4) Jesus is aware that "**Our footsteps have not been unwavering, and doubts have made us walk uncertainly and slowly on the road this course sets forth.**" (W.RV.1.5) I would guess this is the truth for many of us who have a hard time committing to regular and consistent practice. Now he is inviting us to give more effort and more time to prepare for "**another phase of understanding.**" (W.RV.1.3) He wants us to firm up our purpose and set the goal with more certainty. He wants it for us because he knows that this is where our happiness lies. We are being prepared for Part II of the Workbook so we can move forward with a stronger purpose and more dedication and sincerity.

Jesus is aware of how invested we are in the ego thought system, but he is also aware of just how miserable it makes us. That is why he is encouraging us to give more effort and more time to our practice. We are taking another step forward on our journey, so he is encouraging us to be as steadfast as we can in our learning.

This prayer that we say to God is the acknowledgment that we still have doubts and distractions. We ask with humility to "**Let our doubts be quiet and our holy minds be still**" (W.RV.2.2) so we can hear Him speak to us. The important thing about this prayer is the humility to see that we are like little children, following along where we are led, recognizing that we don't know, so we need help and guidance. Jesus knows that we will stumble and forget and choose the ego, but we will be raised up and called back. We don't need to feel guilty when we stumble and temporarily lose our way. We need only remember that we will have help when we wander off and will be constantly called back.

The prayer contains such a beautiful and poignant passage. It carries an image of a father holding the hand of his child while the child does not know where the father will take him but knows he is safe. "**And if we stumble, You will raise us up.**" (W.RV.3.2) What a comforting thought! We are safe and protected and can lean on our Father's sure support in our practicing. It is such a beautiful prayer and takes us beyond words into a loving relationship with our Father, which is

the intent now. The words are not important. They just point us to the truth. We need to really connect with the deep meaning behind the words if we are to enter an experience of the Self. "**This Self alone knows Love. This Self alone is perfectly consistent in Its Thoughts; knows Its Creator, understands Itself, is perfect in Its knowledge and Its Love, and never changes from Its constant state of union with Its Father and Itself.** (W.RV.4.4-5) "**And it is this that waits to meet us at the journey's ending.**" (W.RV.5.1) We connect with this Self when we experience moments of total Oneness in our meditation, which is the foretaste of Heaven that the Course talks about.

Jesus gave us a personal and direct message, telling us: "**I take the journey with you. For I share your doubts and fears a little while, that you may come to me who recognize the road by which all fears and doubts are overcome.**" (W.RV.6.1-2) Jesus is a symbol of the love in our minds. We can call on his help because we cannot heal the mind without him. It is not up to us to fix ourselves but to wake up to who we are, and we do so with his help. We need this help because the ego will never undo itself.

The reality is that we are in a state of doubt and fear because of our choice for the ego. We must be willing to look at the choice that we are making in each moment---for Heaven or for hell. Where we made a faulty choice before, we can make a better one now. "**Trials are but lessons that you failed to learn presented once again, so where you made a faulty choice before you now can make a better one, and thus escape all pain that what you chose before has brought to you.**" (T.31.VIII.3.1) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.87)

When fear thoughts show up, look at them and be willing to let Jesus help you see their unreality. He is not part of the dream. He is in the right mind where we can look at the dream with him from above the battleground; or we can sit next to him in the movie theater and watch the dream like a movie being played out on the screen. He can help us to see the movie of our lives and to see that it is all a dream. He shows us the unreality of the fearful thoughts in our wrong mind and helps us to recognize that we are not the character on the screen but the observer of the play.

Through the choice we make for forgiveness with Jesus as our guide, we return to the Self as the One Son---One with Jesus and with all brothers---so we can learn there is no separation and there are no separate interests. We have descended down the ladder from a very lofty place, and now we must ascend step-by-step back to where the journey began. We need to do our part in this process. That is why Jesus is asking us, "**Help me now to lead you back to where the journey was begun, to make another choice with me.**" (W.RV.7.5) With his help, we are now retracing our steps back to our original decision; so, where we made a faulty choice before, we can now choose again.

Jesus keeps encouraging us by helping us to see how unhappy and miserable we are and how bitter is our need. He is not cajoling us to apply these Lessons for any reason other than for our own completion and release. He only wants our happiness. Do we want it for ourselves as much as he wants it for us? Are we prepared to acknowledge that this is the only way out of our misery? I know how much I have tried to make myself better by working on fixing myself, but I know that my underlying anxiety cannot be healed with illusory fixes. We cannot do this alone because, as the Lesson said yesterday, when we try to do it alone, we are turning to fear (the ego) and looking to it for relief and support. Thus, we give love's attributes to fear, looking for safety where there is none. In fact, this is the way that fear is kept.

Now he asks that we let him use our voice, our eyes, our feet, and our hands so he can work through us for the benefit of all the world. He needs our body to help others see that, through our

demonstration, they can make the same choice we have made. Thus, the body can serve a holy purpose, not through preaching but by demonstrating that there is no separation, and no one is excluded from our love.

Today, we notice each time we are tempted to give the illusion primacy in our lives by making decisions by ourselves. We choose instead the thoughts he gives us to help us to remember the truth about ourselves. He is asking us to keep these thoughts uppermost in our minds throughout the day. We will still attend to what we need to do in the day, but now the attention is on our thoughts. When we set the intention in the morning and do our practice with sincerity and focus, we can have a day of peace.

**"Yet are the words but aids, and to be used, except at the beginning and the end of practice periods, but to recall the mind, as needed, to its purpose."** (W.RV.12.1) We use the words as the means to point us to the truth and to **". . . recall the mind, as needed to its purpose."** (W.RV.12.1) Our faith is not in the words but in the decision to choose again and be led to the experience of healing. The content is always what is important and not the form. We are choosing the content of love or guilt. The situations and relationships of this world provide us with the perfect classroom where we can take the faulty choices of the past and now make a new choice to heal our misperceptions.

Throughout these Review Lessons, we open to the truth with the central idea: **"God is but Love, and therefore so am I."** (W.RV.4.3) We need this constant practice simply because we don't believe that we have all the attributes of God. We have thoroughly taught ourselves that we are egos, living in this material world.

We are created in the image of God, which is pure love and is, therefore, what we are as well. We are not our personalities because we have lots of evidence that they are not pure love. The personality, and self-concept, that we identify with in the world is not what we are and is not real. What is real is our true Self, which is still in the mind of God. Our dedication to practice will bring us to an experience of this Self.

We take this unifying idea and really work with it in our practice and in our meditation time for the next ten days. We remind ourselves daily, **"God is but Love, and therefore so am I."** (W.RV.4.3) For the Lesson today, we review again, **"All things are echoes of the Voice for God."** (W.151) Our judgments are based on ignorance and doubt, and thus our certainty is just a cloak for uncertainty. With this Lesson, we learn that we must doubt the evidence that our senses show us in the world and let the Holy Spirit be the judge of what is worthy for us to take in. He is the purifier of our thoughts.

The thought, **"The power of decision is my own,"** (W.152) reminds us of the fact that we have chosen everything that seems to happen to us. Our mind is where our power is and where our salvation (healing) lies. Since God created you, you must remain unchangeable. So, by definition, all transitory states are false.

These two ideas in the Review Lesson today are bound by the truth that God is Love and therefore so are we. And yet, what is this Self we are trying to experience? **"This Self alone is perfectly consistent in Its thoughts; knows Its Creator, understands Itself, is perfect in Its knowledge and Its love, and never changes from Its constant state of union with Its Father and Itself."** (W.RV.4.5)

If I truly want to know that I am love, I will recognize that every circumstance, every event, every problem, and everything that appears to be happening in my life is for my benefit. No, this will not make my ego happy, but that is no longer my goal. Behind everything that I seem to be experiencing is the Love of God and the echo of His Voice, singing a love song and calling me to my Self, my Home, and my Reality.

If I am love, all that I need to do is bring the thoughts that block my awareness of this love to the Holy Spirit. If I refuse to do that, I am making a choice to stay in hell by holding onto my perspectives. With a willingness to change my mind, the miracle is made available. What seems to take time is how long it takes to get to this willingness. **"The power of decision is my own."** (W.152)

On behalf of our happiness, let us really take in the words today and make this practice a gift to God, which is a gift to the Self that we are. Let us commit to feeling the essence of these Lessons. Let us wake with them, go to sleep with them, and keep them with us all day, no matter how raucous the shrieks of the ego may become. We affirm that there is only one truth and that truth is---we are infinite love.

Love and blessings, Sarah  
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