



Lesson 326
I am forever an effect of God.

Sarah's Commentary:

This Lesson reminds us that we, as a holy Thought in God's Mind, have never left our holy home. We are forever His Effect. We are His Creation. **"Creation is the sum of all God's Thoughts, in number infinite, and everywhere without all limit."** (W.PII.Q11.What is Creation?1.1) **"As You created me I have remained."** (W.326.1.3) We have all His characteristics. Nothing about what we are is unlike God except whatever we have conjured up in our own imagination that we think we are instead. The body and personality with which we identify are not what we are.

When we release our mistaken ideas about ourselves to the Holy Spirit, we experience a reflection of our true Self as created by God. It requires acceptance of the Correction (Atonement). Despite what we may think of ourselves, the truth is that there is nothing we can do or have done to change God's creation. In other words, we have not changed the truth about ourselves because we can't change what God created. It is very reassuring to know that we are still the pristine, pure, holy, and divine Sons of God. There is nothing we have done that has changed the truth no matter how we think we have screwed up or what mistakes we have made. We have not made ourselves into "something else." We need not hold onto guilt and self-punishment for what we believe we have done. We need not take responsibility for the error, but only for the Correction. Our innocence is here now.

We watched a beautiful movie called *Sun Chaser*, which illustrates how guilt from the past drove a young doctor to close his heart and take on a self-concept that reflected self-hate. His journey was about forgiving himself as he journeyed through his darkness. It required great honesty where he came to express his anger, which had been held contained in his persona that he reflected to the world.

Today's Lesson is very much like Lesson 67, **"Love created me like Itself"** a statement of what we are that is described as **"complete and accurate. This is why you are the light of the world."** (W.67.1.1-2) Jesus says that this is why our reality and our nature is wholly unchanged and unchangeable. We are asked to release everything we have accepted about ourselves that blocks this truth. Everything that we have come to think we are is false. We are not what we call ourselves. We are not our bodies. We are not our thoughts. We are not our personalities, nor the concepts and beliefs we hold about ourselves. We cannot suffer and die. Our minds are simply preoccupied with false thoughts, beliefs, concepts, and images that we have chosen to believe.

In Chapter 7, in Section I, **"The Last Step,"** (T.7.I) (ACIM OE T.7.I. "Introduction") Jesus reminds us that we all see ourselves as outside of the Kingdom, so it is hard for us to imagine we have never left our home with God. How can we, as a Thought in the mind of God, ever leave our Source? It

would mean that this thought would have to be released from God's Mind. We need the experience of the holy instant so we can have a glimpse of our wholeness. It is an instant of transcendence where we recognize that the ego is not who we are. You may want to check out Chapter 15.IV that speaks of practicing the holy instant where specific instructions are given us by Jesus on how we can be released from littleness.

Jesus reminds us that we are too afraid of God---too afraid of Love---so our awakening to reality is preceded by the happy dream. All our practice of the Lessons is to experience the miracle and thus to facilitate awakening from the dream. The miracle shifts our perception from fearful dreams to gentle dreams. With each experience, our motivation increases until, at the end, we can have the confidence and assurance that "**You will gather Your effects into the tranquil Heaven of Your Love.**" (W.326.1.8). This is such a beautiful image of our homecoming after having wandered off from the tranquility of our home in God.

We are not these discrete and limited beings. We are One with God. "**We seem to be discrete, and unaware of our eternal unity with Him.**" (W.PII.Q11.4.2) Yet we can become aware of what we are as we take the steps laid out for us. We have been given a step-by-step process to go past all our doubts and fears, moment by moment, to experience peace and joy and be restored to sanity. Certainty is of God. In this world, nothing is certain. Our notion of what love is can turn to anger and hate in an instant. The closest reflection of love in this world is forgiveness.

With each forgiving thought, we recognize that we are not separate. When we forgive, we recognize the innocence of our brother, and thus, we recognize our own. "**Each one you see in light brings your light closer to your awareness. Love always leads to love.**" (T.13.VI.Io.3-4) (ACIM OE T.12.VI.54) It is encouraging to know that love, innocence, and joy are already in us. As we extend them to our brothers, we know we have them in us to give. It is a decision to step back from our reactive inclination to attack and make a choice instead to forgive our misperceptions and turn to the Holy Spirit to ask for His interpretation in place of our own. This does take discipline of the mind. It means to have constant vigilance on behalf of God and the Kingdom and to step away from the ego mind, which counsels us against our own best interests.

Even the thought in my mind that someone has done something wrong and that they are guilty must be seen as an attack. Even the thought in my mind that something outside of me is the reason for how I am feeling needs correction. For example, we are currently renovating our bathroom. There are many decisions to be made such as determining which tiles to pick along with all the other decisions. I was starting to get frustrated and overwhelmed with the process and angry about having to take responsibility for all these decisions. I noticed how much I was making this a problem instead of an opportunity. I became aware of my thoughts and stepped back and asked the Holy Spirit to please make this easy for me. At the very next tile store, along came an angel, who beautifully guided us through the process, and all was made truly easy. Such events help me to recognize the constant presence of Help, always there. We just need to pay attention and follow the joy. We are not an effect of the ego. We truly are an effect of God. What that means is there need not be any anxiety or worry. We can rest in the knowledge that everything is unfolding perfectly for our highest good.

With each prayer, we make a personal appeal to our own decision-making minds to open to the experience of God's power, and that power is simply the power to extend love here on earth. How do we manifest this power? We extend love and blessings to everyone we meet---not by our own volition, but with the willingness and desire to know their innocence. We see that we are the same

with every brother. We choose to see the innocence and beauty in everyone. We see the Christ, but that is not something that can be manufactured. We are often triggered by circumstances, people, and events in our lives, and we may react with anger, frustration, and judgment. Since this world is a classroom for healing, we have a choice to either act on those feelings that are triggered in us or become aware of our unhealed pain and ask for help. This is an opportunity to investigate the beliefs we hold that do not serve us. It is not to judge ourselves, but simply to notice.

Isn't it reassuring to know that we can't determine what we are? God is the Cause, and we are His effect. Nothing can change that. Nothing we have done makes any difference to the truth. The truth simply shines forth, waiting for us to acknowledge that this is so. "***Cause and its effects are indistinguishable,***" (W.326.1.5) meaning we simply cannot be distinguished from our Source. We have all of God's attributes. We are divine beings with the power to create the same as His power to create. When I join with a brother or sister and connect at a deep level, experiencing the joy, peace, and compassion of true joining, I know that it is not Sarah's personality, the dream figure, that can do anything. It is the truth of the Self, shining through this body and used by Spirit as a communication device. This requires me to surrender my way, my control, and my defenses. The connection between two souls is truly the power of divinity shining through the eyes. The awareness that sees through you is the same awareness that sees through my eyes.

In our experience on this earth, we can be clear mirrors, reflecting Heaven. "***Your plan I follow here, and at the end I know that You will gather Your effects into the tranquil Heaven of Your Love, where earth will vanish, and all separate thoughts unite in glory as the Son of God.***" (W.326.1.8) While we seem to be here, we have just one function, which is forgiveness, until we come to true perception and the real world. In the end, there will be no more need to be in this earthly classroom any longer, and we will then disappear into God. "***Let us today behold earth disappear, at first transformed, and then forgiven, fade entirely into God's holy Will.***" (W.326.2.1) In other words, when we come to the end of our journey here, our experience is transformed into the happy dream because our mind is now the clear reflection of God's Love. We are then lifted up to Heaven as God takes the Last Step. That is the case when our unhealed thoughts are all brought to truth. Now our worldly classroom is no longer needed.

Today, we ask our Father to help us to know that we can never leave Him. Let us use every opportunity to watch our thoughts and challenge them so we don't act on them when they come from anger, judgment, frustration, superiority, worry, and anxiety. We acknowledge and feel the pain of our experiences in the world, but we willingly give up the idea that trying to change or control anything will bring peace. All this does is cover over the unhealed pain that we are trying to distract ourselves from. Denying and repressing the pain, in the desire to be positive, will not help. It must be investigated so we can uncover the beliefs we are holding and give them over to the Holy Spirit for healing. It is all part of the mind training that brings us back to the Self we are.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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