

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 48 There is nothing to fear.

Sarah's Commentary:

The Lesson today clearly reflects why there is nothing to fear. It harkens back to the Lesson yesterday: **"God is the Strength in which I trust."** (W.47) **"The presence of fear is a sure sign that you are trusting in your own strength."** (W.48.3.1) Fear is based on guilt, and guilt demands punishment. When we see ourselves as guilty, we project the guilt and expect punishment. If we want to live without fear, we need to give up the guilt. This means we first have to become aware of it. It is also essential that we see how guilt is tied to our investment in being a unique and separate self.

When we chose to dream, which was the choice for separation, we had to put blocks between ourselves and God. Fear, guilt, shame, and judgment are all effective tools of separation. When we identify with the body, it becomes an example of differences with other bodies. We had to do that in order to have the experience of a separate self, living in the world. It is an experience of fear we are no longer willing to accommodate. Now, when obstacles come up, we are more willing to let them go so that we might experience more peace and joy. It is very helpful to be willing to see what is coming up and not resist it.

We have long invested in our independence, but it is built on very shaky ground. As Jesus put it yesterday, **"What can you predict or control? What is there in you that can be counted on? What would give you the ability to be aware of all facets of any problem, and to resolve them in such a way that only good can come of it?"** (W.47.1.2-4) We can't. We don't have that kind of ability, no matter how much we try to develop problem-solving abilities, no matter how many skills we learn, and no matter how much brain power we have. We can't possibly have that kind of perspective where we can know every facet of every problem. There are always nasty surprises, which bring more fear, anxiety, and depression. It all starts with the guilt in the mind. The simple fact is there is only one problem and thus only one solution. The problem is the guilt of separation, and the solution is to remember who we are. It is to remember our holiness.

Jesus tells us the idea for today is simply stating a fact though it is not a fact to us. This is because we still believe in illusions, meaning we believe this world is real and can hurt us. The body can be hurt, but the body is not who we are. The seeming reality of this world does give us apparent reasons for fear as long as we still believe in it and in our own separate identity. Fear shows up when something we are invested in or attached to is taken from us or something we want is not available. Yet Jesus tells us, in truth, there is nothing to fear. To get this, we do need to understand the metaphysics of the Course---that this world of illusion is not real. While we are told this, it is not until we experience our holiness that we will know the world is nothing but illusion, and there truly is nothing to fear. It is no different than waking up from a nightmare where in our awakened state we see there was nothing real happening and thus nothing to fear.

Our biggest fear, of course, is what might happen to our bodies. We fear their destruction. Yet the message of the crucifixion is--the body is not who we are. We are spirit and cannot be hurt or destroyed. **"Nothing can hurt you unless you give it the power to do so."** (T.20.IV.1.1) (ACIM OE T.20.V.28) **"If you will listen to His Voice [the Holy Spirit] you will know that you cannot either hurt or be hurt, and that many need your blessing to help them hear this for themselves."** (T.6.I.19.2) (ACIM OE T.6.II.16)

This place of total safety is in our right minds where the Holy Spirit resides. God is not an external force we have to try to reach. We just have to look at our sadness, depression, anger, guilt, fear, anxiety, and whatever thoughts are disturbing to our mind and be willing to bring them to the truth. All these are thoughts of fear in various forms. We are called to go deep into our own minds where God is, below the **". . . trivial things that churn and bubble on the surface of your mind, and reach down and below them to the Kingdom of Heaven."** (W.47.7.3)

We are part of God's Mind. We are not a figure in the dream who seems to be living here. We are the dreamer of this dream, and we can make a choice as to whether we choose the Holy Spirit or the ego as our guide to seeing. Thus, when we no longer identify with the dream, fear is meaningless. Nothing outside of God exists. Fear is the belief we hold that there is something other than God and that it has power to overcome God. We believe we have taken His power, defeated Him, and changed ourselves. With this belief comes guilt and fear. As a result, we unconsciously invite punishment into our lives. The answer lies in forgiveness, which brings us to the end of guilt, and then we realize our innocence has always been there. There is no fear in innocence. We are still the Holy Son. What we think we did in separating from our Father never happened, so there is no basis for fear.

As we affirm that God is the strength in which we can trust, we are reminded who we are in truth. We are reminded that we have never usurped God's power, He is not a punishing, angry God, and we never distorted ourselves, so there is no need for guilt.

So much of traditional religious teaching is based on fear. It is built on the belief that Adam was put into a place of temptation, which a loving Father would never do. It is also built on the belief that Jesus was allowed to suffer and die on the cross for our sins, which he clearly refutes in the Course. In retraining our minds through the application of these teachings, we can release these deep cultural and religious "truths," which continue to perpetuate our fear. God's only reality is Love, and that is our only reality. We are created in His image. We are Love. There is no fear. It is not real.

We have projected fearful images onto God and are now reluctant and afraid to turn to Him. This fear is not consciously in our awareness, but it is there and needs to be examined. We do so by looking at areas of our lives that we still prefer to manage on our own, whether it is our finances, our relationships, our security, our job, our pleasures, and so on. In each area, list your fears and concerns that would arise in your mind if you were to step back and totally surrender your independent will to God. This reflects our unconscious distrust of God. We still want to be in charge of certain aspects of our lives.

"You, my child, are afraid of your brothers and of your Father and of yourself. But you are merely deceived in them. Ask what they are of the Teacher of reality, and hearing His answer, you too will laugh at your fears and replace them with peace. For fear lies not in reality, but in the minds of children who do not understand reality. It is only their lack of understanding that frightens them, and when they

learn to perceive truly they are not afraid. And because of this they will ask for truth again when they are frightened. It is not the reality of your brothers or your Father or yourself that frightens you. You do not know what they are, and so you perceive them as ghosts and monsters and dragons. Ask what their reality is from the One Who knows it, and He will tell you what they are. For you do not understand them, and because you are deceived by what you see you need reality to dispel your fears." (T.11.VIII.14.1-10) (ACIM OE T.10.VIII.88)

"Would you not exchange your fears for truth, if the exchange is yours for the asking? For if God is not deceived in you, you can be deceived only in yourself. Yet you can learn the truth about yourself from the Holy Spirit, Who will teach you that, as part of God, deceit in you is impossible." (T.11.VIII.15.1-3) (ACIM OE T.10.VIII.90)

Practice instructions today are for short, simple, and frequent practice periods with eyes open whenever you can remind yourself of the Lesson, and a minute or so whenever possible with eyes closed, repeating the idea slowly. Use the idea immediately if anything should disturb your peace. What we are doing in these practice periods is bringing any thoughts that come up during the day of anger, depression, sadness, or any other thought that depicts fear. As soon as we notice a fearful thought, just as quickly we can bring it to the light. To keep a fear thought is to choose the ego over the Holy Spirit. We can make another choice. It is a matter of turning from the false to the truth within.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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