

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 265 Creation's gentleness is all I see.

Sarah's Commentary:

When gentleness is all I see, I recognize gentleness is all I am. This is a new kind of projection or, more appropriately, an extension of the gentleness in the mind. Everything we see in the world is simply a reflection of our own minds. This is why the Course constantly reminds us, "**projection makes perception.**" (T.13.V.3.5) (ACIM OE T.12.V.35) In other words, all we look at in the world is what is in our own minds. Either guilt or our innocence is reflected back at us. In the Introduction to Chapter 21, Jesus quite clearly says that the world we see is "**the outside picture of an inward condition.**" (T.21.IN.1.5) (ACIM OE T.21.I.1) We only see our own sins in another and fool ourselves into thinking they are not in our own minds but are, in fact, in others. We think we need to forgive someone else, when in fact, forgiveness is about releasing our own sins. "**I have indeed misunderstood the world, because I laid my sins on it and saw them looking back at me.**" (W.265.1.1) It puts all of the responsibility for healing onto ourselves where all the power is.

In the Song of Prayer, Jesus tells us, "**It is impossible to forgive another, for it is only your own sins you see in him. You want to see them there, and not in you. That is why the forgiveness of another is an illusion. Yet it is the only happy dream in all the world; the only one that does not lead to death. Only in someone else can you forgive yourself, for you have called him guilty of your sins, and in him must your innocence now be found. Who but the sinful need to be forgiven? And do not ever think you can see sin in anyone except yourself.**" (S.2.B.4)

When we are seeing sin in our brothers, we need to bring it back to our own minds and release the judgments we are holding there. Our brothers are just a reflection of our own minds. When we take responsibility for our projections, we are given an opportunity to see our self-attacking thoughts. Our thoughts create the battleground where we find ourselves when we are not at peace. To come to peace is to step out of this battleground by looking at the thoughts that keep us invested in the world.

Forgiveness requires that we look at our thoughts without judgment. It is to recognize that nothing outside of the mind can take away our peace. We need to uncover the beliefs that we are holding so we can release them and experience the truth. We hold onto our beliefs and opinions because we think that they keep us safe and secure. The truth of our magnificent Self is always available, but covered over and protected by our defenses. We can be grateful to have everything exposed, as this is where our healing lies. Yes, it can get pretty rough as we go through the darkness, but we don't go alone. We hold the hand of Jesus, who willingly goes there with us.

All meaning we give any situation comes from our own minds. So when a brother seems to attack us or creates situations or events that seem difficult for us to overlook, he is offering us an opportunity to look within at what we are holding in the mind that does not serve us. When we determine he is unworthy of love and deserving of punishment and we blame him for what we are

feeling, we are missing the opportunity to heal what is being revealed to us in this encounter. Everyone is a mirror in which we see our own unhealed minds.

We are called to see that we are all the same. We all make mistakes. Yet we are all still the innocent Son of God, worthy of love. When we don't want to take responsibility for the guilt in our minds, we project it onto someone we think is more deserving of it. Thus, we believe we have gotten rid of it. Now we see them as guilty, and we believe we are off the hook. What this attempts to do is to buy our innocence at the expense of our brothers, the guilty ones. We hope God is watching and will see their guilt and punish them rather than us; but of course, this does not work. True innocence is not bought at the expense of our brothers.

We prefer to see the guilt outside ourselves because then we don't have to take responsibility for it as coming from our own minds. Yet what the ego has kept from our awareness is that by seeing the guilt in others, we keep it. By holding attack thoughts, we expect to be attacked back. We expect punishment as the cycle of sin, guilt, and fear continues, but we can choose to stop it, look at it, and release it to the Holy Spirit. As we do this practice, we come to remember who we are and who our brothers are in truth. The beauty of this shift in the mind is such a gift! We are all worth this effort.

The many opportunities we have to watch our own minds and take responsibility for our projections can all be welcomed because now we can see that everything "out there" is only a reflection of our own thoughts. (W.265.1.8) So much of our own guilt is buried, which is why we need this outward picture of our inward condition in order to uncover the guilt from which we have become disassociated. Every upsetting situation is just a misperception on our part. We need to look at why we are calling this witness to our guilt and fear. If we want to know our own divinity, we need to look at it all and ask to see how every situation has the potential in it to support our awakening if we choose to use it for that purpose. So when we start to embrace it all, we become happy learners and the world provides us with a perfect classroom and many opportunities for forgiveness. It is an inner journey.

Through healing, we can come to a place where only Creation's gentleness is seen everywhere. When we are seeing through true perception, no matter what the situation looks like, we can see beyond appearances to the innocence behind everything our eyes report. We then look on everyone with "holy eyes."

I love the word gentleness. It comes up very often in the Course with nearly 200 references. Most of the references are about the gentleness of the Holy Spirit working with us. We need the experience of His gentleness because of our terror of where He is leading us. Our fear is that He will take us to our own destruction, but Jesus assures us otherwise. We wake up to the reality that we are immortal beings of love and light.

We shy away from the idea of gentleness because it seems ineffectual in the face of attack. We may think of it as weakness. Yet we are told in the Manual for Teachers that true might lies in gentleness. In the Manual, gentleness is described as a characteristic of all the teachers of God. Harm is considered a weakness and keeps us in hell, whereas gentleness is called "**limitless strength.**" (M.4.IV.2.7) It is where our might comes from because it comes from joining our will with our Source. It is the recognition, "**Harm is impossible for God's teachers.**" (M.4.IV.1.1) It is a feeling of total safety. From this place of safety, there is nothing to defend. While gentleness may be seen as weakness in the world, true gentleness is total strength. The harmless are mighty, not wimpy because they fear nothing. They know their reality is not the body but the eternal Self.

What makes the gentle so strong is the realization that attacking, harmful, intolerant, and hurtful thoughts do not come from our Source--- God---and therefore they have no power. Only by joining our thoughts with Him, Who is our Source, does our true will, which has always been one with

God's, have unlimited power. Today, we have the opportunity to "**see the world in the celestial gentleness with which creation shines.**" (W.265.1.4) To do so, we look past the forms and past the dream figures (other bodies) to see the truth of who our brother is. Yet this is not possible if we let our sins "**obscure the light of Heaven shining on the world.**" (W.265.1.6) Because our minds are one with God, (W.265.1.10) we have the capacity to see everyone as God does. "**And so I can perceive creation's gentleness.**" (W.265.1.10) If I don't, it is only because I am holding thoughts of judgment and condemnation. Judging myself for the thoughts I hold is not helpful. We must feel everything and allow the hatred in the mind to be exposed.

Today, be willing to look at the judgments you are holding about anyone and be willing to recognize that you are only seeing your own sins projected outward. Be willing to be shown another way by questioning your judgments and releasing your stories about the situation. They are all false. Now the Holy Spirit can show you another way. All you have to do is willingly give over your thoughts to Him. Do not try to do what only He can do. In other words, this is not about trying to fix yourself or trying to undo your own perspectives. It is about realizing guilt is a mistake and you can smile at your misperceptions and ask to see truly. He will show you your brother's reality shining with celestial gentleness, and you will know this about yourself as well.

In the context of our reading, "**What is the Body?**" (W.PII.Q5), we are urged to change the purpose that we give to the body. While we are here, our purpose is not to love or hate the body but to use it for a gentle purpose, extending love and forgiveness until we can transcend it by recognizing we are not the dream figure at all but the dreamer of this dream. Through forgiveness, we can have a happier dream; and it can be now, in this very moment. It requires discipline and determination to clear the mind of our projections with the help of the Holy Spirit. Thus, space is made for the miracle. Our part is simply to look at the ego and be willing to have our judgments released.

Today, I looked at the expectations I have of my partner, who has been very involved in activities where I felt ignored and neglected. As I reflected on what I was feeling and thus demanding, I saw how I was projecting guilt onto my brother and expecting love to come from outside my own mind. I forgot that I am the love, and if I am not feeling it, I am blocking it with my judgments and expectations. Whatever is lacking in any relationship is what we are not giving to it. It is not his responsibility to meet my needs and expectations that I set up for how I should be treated in order to feel loved. Love cannot be extracted from outside of our own minds. Remembering that we are love, and we are 100% responsible for our happiness, helps us look at our own blocks to remembering the truth. The truth is, we are not lacking in love. The truth is, we *are* the love we are seeking in the world.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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