



LESSON 128

The world I see holds* nothing that I want.

Sarah's Commentary:

There are three related Lessons here, starting with the one today and continuing with the next two. The Lesson tomorrow reads, "**Beyond this world there is a world I want,**" (W.129) and Lesson 130 says, "**It is impossible to see two worlds,**" (W.130) meaning we are making a choice in each moment and with each decision as to which world we value---the world of the ego or the world of the Holy Spirit.

We are advised not to mistake the message of this Lesson by thinking Jesus is saying that the things of this world are wrong, bad, or even forbidden. If we interpret it in this way, it would suggest that he is asking us to give up what we still value and hold as important. He does not intend for us to live as an ascetic by giving up things in form while still being attached to them. To do so is to confuse form and content; it reflects our fear of surrendering to God in the belief that we will be left with very little. We fear the loss of our creature comforts and the people and places we still want in our lives. The ego warns us that if we give everything over to God, we will have to live with deprivation and scarcity. Yet Jesus continually assures us that there is nothing to give up except our fear and our guilt, and in their place, we are given abundance and limitless love. When we value the things of this world, we give importance to that which has no value, but until we see this and experience it for ourselves, it would indeed feel like a sacrifice to let these things go.

All we are being asked to do is look at the things of this world that we currently turn to for relief of our pain and suffering. Jesus is asking us to see how we believe there are special people, material things, and substances we turn to in order to fill what we think is lacking in us. He does not say we are prohibited from going after these things in the belief it is spiritual to do so, but he makes it very clear that the things we pursue in the world do not compare to the gifts that come from connecting with our true Self. Our toys and treasures are not being taken away from us. He is only asking us to question why we would want to continue to seek for happiness where it does not exist. This is the question we need to investigate. With everything we do, we can ask one simple question. "Will what I am pursuing bring me closer to my goal of awakening?"

When we read, "**The world I see holds nothing that I want,**" (W.128.9.4) it may not be entirely true for us. It is important to remember that the focus of this Lesson is about the purpose we give to the things of the world, not the things themselves. Each thing we value binds us to the world. While we continue to believe that the things of this world will bring happiness, we will pursue them until we recognize that they only keep us bound to guilt. The only purpose the world has is to help us learn that there is nothing here of intrinsic value for us. Yet everything can be used by the Holy Spirit to help us learn the Lesson of forgiveness.

We are learning to undo our investment in our bodily identity. Even if we think of ourselves as very spiritually advanced because we have been with the Course for a long time or because we

think we get it, we need to look with honesty at the "body thoughts" that still tempt us. What are these? They relate to our mistaken notion that the body is who we are, and thus we focus on pursuing pleasure, safety, protection, longevity, beauty, comfort, food, sex, sleep, power, material things, substances, and whatever we think is the source of our happiness. We believe there are things, substances, and people in the world that are the source of our pleasure and make us feel good about ourselves. It is a belief that we are lacking and need these things, as well as our special relationships. When we really come to accept that none of the things of this world are the source of our happiness, our attachments to them will diminish until they fall away.

We have blocked our awareness of the Christ Self that we are, and thus, we experience pain, believing we have turned ourselves into these needy, lacking beings who now need to fill up the emptiness with specialness. We think we are the body, and as such, it rules us with all its needs and wants. This journey is about releasing our minds from the demands we have placed on them. This is the purpose for everything in this world, and nothing else. It is not about letting the world go but about using the world as a classroom for letting the guilt in our minds be released.

Jesus says, "**Believe this thought, and you are saved from years of misery, from countless disappointment, and from hopes that turn to bitter ashes of despair.**" (W.128.1.2) We need to look with great honesty at our investments, which are the places we have determined that our happiness can be found. If we really look at them, we can see that the promise they held for our happiness fell far short of our expectations. I was thinking about this when I went out today to find another birdhouse. Is this where my happiness is? To have another birdhouse? Is it wrong to buy birdhouses? Of course not! As the Lesson says, we only need to disconnect our belief that happiness can be found in our worldly collections, whatever they may be.

When we perceive our happiness coming from something in the world, it puts another chain across our minds. It hides our awareness of the Divine Self we are and the knowledge that this Self is the source of our true happiness. (W.128.2.1) Jesus is not asking us to sacrifice anything we still want or to feel guilty when we pursue something that has no value. He is only asking us to look at the guilt in the mind that has projected this world of form. He is asking us to see, "**The only purpose worthy of your mind this world contains is that you pass it by, without delaying to perceive some hope where there is none.**" (W.128.2.3) Ultimately, we are being shown that there is no world. It has no reality. The only thing real is God's Love and not what the world has to offer. However, everything in the world can be used by the Holy Spirit for our awakening when we choose to use it in this way.

When we value something, it becomes part of our identity, which is what he means when he says, "**For what you value you make part of you as you perceive yourself.**" (W.128.3.2) Clearly, we value our bodily identity and thus believe it is our reality. We surround the body with whatever we value. For example, I think my home is a reflection of me, and, in my estimation, I think it defines me and makes me valuable for what I have. For many of us, we think our jobs, our connection with our special partners, or important people we know define us. Yet Jesus says that this is not so. The exact opposite occurs, because "**All things you seek to make your value greater in your sight limit you further, hide your worth from you, and add another bar across the door that leads to true awareness of your Self.**" (W.128.3.3) When I give value to the body and what it does and who it knows, I am seeing my reality as a body rather than recognizing the Christ Self as what I really am.

I had an interesting experience with this last night. I had the most severe case of food poisoning that I have ever known. When the body is in such a state of discomfort, it does feel like it is my entire identity. It becomes the focus of all our attention. As I was lying in bed, I asked for the Holy

Spirit to help me to see this experience of the body as not my reality. My reality is my Christ Self. I was determined not to use the body's sickness to keep me from the love that I am. I started to witness the bodily experience and saw it as separate from what I am. While the character in the dream was not well, the Self, observing the character, was at peace. I felt this with deep conviction and knew all was well, regardless of the state of the body. The body is not who I am. I affirmed that there is no sickness in God's Kingdom and His Kingdom is the only reality. The world of bodies and sickness cannot be the truth.

We fall in love with a special person and think we are at the height of happiness, only to be at the depths of despair when things don't go as we had hoped. Anything we value binds us to the world because of the purpose we have given it to make us happy. Why would we value a world that keeps us bound and chained to it? Why would we want to use it to hide the truth about ourselves? Why would we continue to look for our happiness where it does not exist? Why would we want to continue to seek for anything we deem valuable outside of ourselves when this keeps us imprisoned? We continue to look for fulfillment where it does not exist. It is not about asking for help to give up our attachments to the things of this world but only asking for help in understanding the purpose our attachments serve. They serve the ego's purpose as a defense against the truth of who we are. They affirm our reality as bodies, separate from others, and living in the world.

Last night, I was at a function where someone posed a question. They asked us what was our biggest and best dream and then asked us to visualize ourselves achieving it. My mind struggled with the question because I was reminded of this Lesson. What dream in this world could I want? There is nothing wrong with dreams. There is nothing wrong with our worldly achievements. There is nothing wrong with wanting them. Yet, ultimately, we will want to come to the place where we recognize that staying bound to the world will never bring us the joy, love, and peace, which is our inheritance because of what we are. When we value the things of this world that we think will make us happy, it keeps us from looking for happiness where it truly can be found. **"All things you seek to make your value greater in your sight limit you further, hide your worth from you, and add another bar across the door that leads to true awareness of your Self."** (W.128.3.3)

Today, let us examine the attachments we have that keep us chained to the world. What do we still believe about where our happiness lies? When we see how unhappy we are and see the suffering inherent in being attached to this world, we will no longer want it and choose instead the peace of God as our priority above all things. We will no longer pursue what we once valued. I love the comment Jim Carey made when he said, "I hope you get everything you wish for in this world so that you will see it is not what you ever wanted." As long as we are here, we can experience what we came to experience as a body until we no longer want it and come to a state of readiness to choose God. A seeker once said to Krishnamurti, "I want to experience God." Krishnamurti asked, "What is stopping you?" Can we itemize what is stopping us? Krishnamurti then said, "Drop it." Fear comes up. Why? Because these things seem to define who we think we are.

"Forget not that the healing of God's Son is all the world is for. That is the only purpose the Holy Spirit sees in it, and thus the only one it has. Until you see the healing of the Son as all you wish to be accomplished by the world, by time and all appearances, you will not know the Father nor yourself. For you will use the world for what is not its purpose, and will not escape its laws of violence and death. Yet it is given you to be beyond its laws in all respects, in every way and every circumstance, in all temptation to perceive what is not there, and all belief God's Son can suffer pain because he sees himself as he is not." (T.24.VI.4.1-5) (ACIM OE T.24.VII.52)

Everyone and every circumstance we encounter in this world can be used by the Holy Spirit to unwind the mind from attachment to the world. Each one is an opportunity to look at how we keep ourselves in chains and how each circumstance can be used for healing and release. Everything we experience in this moment is an invitation for healing. Everything is totally perfect for this purpose, no matter what judgment of good or bad we might put on it. When the Lesson says, "**We leave it [the world] free of purposes we gave its aspects and its phases and its dreams,**" (W.128.5.2) Jesus is telling us that the ultimate problem is the value we have bestowed on the world; it is the value we have placed on the many things we think the world offers us and all about what purpose does it serve.

Leaving everything in the world free of our own purpose is to accept "what is." Only our resistance to "what is" creates suffering in our minds. When "**We hold it [the world] purposeless within our minds, and loosen it from all we wish it were,**" (W.128.5.3) we are freed from this world. "**Pause and be still a little while, and see how far you rise above the world, when you release your mind from chains and let it seek the level where it finds itself at home.**" (W.128.6.1) Jesus tells us that when we do this, our mind will be grateful.

Imagine the freedom of allowing your mind to soar. This reminds me of the book, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Jonathan Livingston, the seagull, refuses to be invested in what was readily available in the garbage dump where all his buddies seek for treasures. Instead, he is like the mind that "... **knows where it belongs**" [with God in Heaven] (W.128.6.3) and simply wants to fly free. One day, Jonathan---standing on the shore, closing his eyes and concentrating, all in a flash---knew what Chiang, the wisest gull, had been telling him. "Why, it is true! I am a perfect, unlimited gull!" He felt a great shock of joy at this recognition. It is the same joy we long to know and to experience.

"Your mind cannot be stopped in this unless you choose to stop it." (W.44.7.3) We are the ones who have chained the mind, "**But free its wings, and it will fly in sureness and in joy to join its holy purpose.**" (W.128.6.4) The decision-making mind can make this choice, but the ego will never choose for this freedom. It is what keeps us chained. Its mantra is for us to keep seeking, but never find. We have Mighty Help in us to free our mind so it can soar and "... **fly in sureness and in joy to join its holy purpose.**" (W.128.6.4)

With this practice, Jesus assures us, "**And when your eyes are opened afterwards, you will not value anything you see as much as when you looked at it before.**" (W.128.7.2) Each time we free our mind and let it soar, our perspective will shift, meaning that the value we put on the world will change. Rather than giving up anything in the world, we just shift our perspective in how we see it and what we give value to.

Protect your mind throughout the day as well. When you think you see some value in an aspect or an image of the world, refuse to lay this chain upon your mind, but tell yourself with quiet certainty, "**This will not tempt me to delay myself. The world I see holds nothing that I want.**" (W.128.8.3-4) Our investment in the world is our investment in guilt. Be willing to admit that you don't know where your happiness lies. By doing so, your perspective will change just a little each time you bring awareness to your worldly temptations. Be willing to stop and step back and look with the Holy Spirit. He will give you a new way to see everything. Every time you are upset by anything in your day, ask for His help to see it differently. Be willing to ask for guidance in everything. Be willing to be led by giving up the "I know" mind.

Ken Wapnick, a magnificent teacher of this Course, has told us that there is one simple question we can ask that consolidates all the teachings and will help us unify our learning. It illustrates for

us what Jesus calls the simplicity of salvation. Ken said, anytime we are confronted with a situation, an event, a relationship, or a bodily condition where we feel anguish, guilt, fear, pain, or judgment, we can ask ourselves, "Is what I am doing, feeling, thinking, or saying helping me in my awakening from this dream or impeding my path and solidifying my ego?" Ask this question consistently of yourself regarding everything in your day.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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*~ Course in Miracles Society chose their title for this Lesson from the scribe's original notes:
"The world I see has* nothing that I want."*