



**LESSON 227**  
**This is my holy instant of release.**

**Sarah's Commentary:**

The intent of our practice now is to enter the holy instant. What is the holy instant? It is the instant outside of time in which we choose forgiveness instead of guilt, the miracle instead of the grievance, and the Holy Spirit instead of the ego. It is the expression of our little willingness to enter the experience of the present, which is a window to eternity. Holding onto the past and fearing the future is what keeps us in hell. The holy instant is an experience of Oneness. It is a sense of transcendence from our identification with the body. It is recognizing that we are joined with our brothers where separate interests are dissolved. It is an acceptance of the truth about ourselves. Thus, we can see that the holy instant is a very flexible concept, covering a variety of experiences of the truth of what we are as Spirit. The experiences may be fleeting, yet they increase as we practice the Lessons and apply them in our lives more and more. They bring us to a state of being that brings us closer to the experience of the real world. The real world reflects the truth in our right minds.

Through the experiences of the holy instant, we are released from our mistaken idea that we have defiled ourselves and are too guilt-ridden to ever return home. With guilt comes the fear of God's punishment, which the ego has told us we have coming to us because of our sin. The guilt that is in the mind as a result of our belief in sin is projected onto the world. Now we experience a world of suffering, where problems abound. But the experience of separation is dissolved in the Holy Spirit's gentle love, as we bring all of our misperceptions about ourselves and the world to His healing light. Now our wrong-minded thoughts give way and the recognition that our will is one with God's Will comes to our awareness.

**"You are the Will of God. Do not accept anything else as your will, or you are denying what you are. Deny this and you will attack, believing you have been attacked. But see the Love of God in you, and you will see it everywhere because it is everywhere. See His abundance in everyone and you will know that you are in Him with them. They are part of you, as you are part of God. You are as lonely without understanding this as God Himself is lonely when His Sons do not know Him. The peace of God is understanding this."** (T.7.VII.10.1-8) (ACIM OE T.7.VIII.80)

Yes, as Jesus tells us in this Lesson, we do think we have made another will, but in spite of what we believe, it does not actually exist at all. To us, it does seem that we have a separate will from God's Will. We experience ourselves as separate and alone with a unique individual identity. We seem to have private thoughts, beliefs, and opinions that we think are ours alone. **"Yet nothing that I thought apart from You [God] exists."** (W.227.1.3) Thus, who I think I am does not even exist! We are all characters in a dream playing out a role with other characters, whom we think are as real as we think we are! Ideas do not leave their source. Everything we see is a projection of what is in our minds.

We exercise our separate will when we focus on what we want to accomplish, what we are hoping will happen, and what conflicts we believe are in front of us to resolve. We exercise our separate will in our chosen individual goals, our plans for safety, comfort, and pleasure, and our self-preservation, both physically and psychologically. We talk of using our willpower to overcome some addiction or other perceived malady in ourselves, and thus we try to exert our will, instead of connecting to the true power available within our right minds. When we recognize that "**my will is Yours** [God's]," (W.227.1.1) we are surrendering to His Will and joining in His power, which is in us. We admit that in and of ourselves, and through our own willpower, we are actually powerless. We give up our illusions and "**lay them down before the feet of truth.**" (W.227.1.5) When we sincerely give up our illusions, they are forever removed from our minds.

The key is to surrender our goals, our plans, our perceived outcomes, and our control. We surrender our thoughts, release them into His Hands, and give up being in charge of our own lives. Through forgiveness, we release the thoughts we are holding that interfere with our ability to experience the holy instant. In the Song of Prayer pamphlet, a supplementary to the Course, we are told that forgiveness, as defined in the Course, is very different from how we understand traditional forgiveness. Jesus calls traditional forgiveness "forgiveness to destroy."

**"Forgiveness-to-destroy has many forms, being a weapon of the world of form. Not all of them are obvious, and some are carefully concealed beneath what seems like charity. Yet all the forms that it may seem to take have but this single goal; their purpose is to separate and make what God created equal, different. The difference is clear in several forms where the designed comparison cannot be missed, nor is it really meant to be."** (S.2.II.1.1-4)

The key difference is that forgiveness, as defined in the Course, rests on the truth that what your brother did to you did not happen. Why? The reason is that, in truth, nothing exists that does not come from God. Only our interpretation about what seemed to happen is what must be released.

Our beliefs create a struggle for us. We believe that our reality is a body. We believe that we can find happiness in special relationships. We believe that this world is real. We believe that we can accomplish anything we determine to do, entirely on our own. We believe that we are separate from each other and different from each other. We believe that there are things in this world that will make us happy. We believe that we are totally justified in the way we see things. We defend our positions vigorously. Don't all these things seem to be the case in this seeming reality? What do we do? Why do we stay attached to these positions? Why have we closed our minds instead of raising all of our perceptions to doubt? We do this because we have become comfortable with the status quo, which means we are comfortable with our suffering, our experiences, our struggle, and our story. It is something we know and it demonstrates that we exist. Where will this Course take me if I really commit to learning these Lessons? What will God want from me? What will I have to give up? What will I become? Who will I be? The fear of annihilation of this special self is what makes us cling to it.

Jesus tells us, "**Forgiveness, on the other hand, is still, and quietly does nothing.**" (W.PII.Q1.4.1) *My spouse left me. "It [Forgiveness] merely looks, and waits, and judges not."* (W.PII.Q1.4.3) *My boss chastised me. "It [Forgiveness] merely looks, and waits, and judges not."* *Someone cut me off in traffic. "It [Forgiveness] merely looks, and waits, and judges not."*

What it means is that forgiveness looks at the ego thought system, waits patiently for us to change our minds, and makes no judgment. It does not smash reality into a more desirable shape. We have no idea what anything in our lives is for. We simply do not know what any of it means. Our interpretations are always wrong. Now we agree to release our interpretations and instead turn them over to the Holy Spirit, Who will infuse everything that seems to happen with His purpose, which is undoing the way we see now. We surrender our will and our way!

**"The Holy Spirit asks of you but this; bring to Him every secret you have locked away from Him. Open every door to Him, and bid Him enter the darkness and lighten it away. At your request He enters gladly. He brings the light to darkness if you make the darkness open to Him. But what you hide He cannot look upon. He sees for you, and unless you look with Him He cannot see."** (T.14.VII.6.1-6) (ACIM OE T.14.IV.30)

Thus, to enter the holy instant we clear our minds of what we think we know, what we are withholding: our defenses, our grievances, our will, and our way, and surrender into the quiet center of our being, where we commune with Stillness. This requires no effort. In fact, striving to achieve it puts the ego in charge of our awakening, which will never work. Striving will keep us from this experience. Putting the ego in charge of this process is like trying to make yourself holy. You cannot do it. Just bring your awareness to the thoughts arising and be willing to recognize that they are not the truth. By my taking these thoughts of past hurts, disappointments, anger, hatred, shame, pride, sickness, death, worry, aging, frustrations, and impatience and laying **"them down before the feet of Truth,"** (W.227.1.5) they are **"removed forever from my mind."** (W.227.1.5)

Being what we are not is a strain. Our true reality is our natural state. Rupert Spira puts it well when he says: "We normally think that to be a separate self is natural and effortless and that to be the open, empty presence of Awareness requires effort. In fact, it is the other way around: to be the open, empty presence of Awareness is natural and effortless, but to be a separate self requires a continuous and subtle effort of thinking and feeling."

**"The world you see is but the idle witness that you were right. This witness is insane. You trained it in its testimony, and as it gave it back to you, you listened and convinced yourself that what it saw was true. You did this to yourself. See only this and you will also see how circular the reasoning on which your 'seeing' rests."** (T.21.II.5.1-5) (ACIM OE T.21.III.19)

Love and blessings, Sarah  
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