

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 271

Christ's is the vision I will use today.

Sarah's Commentary:

Now we have a new question, "**What is the Christ?**" We will be reading this Section for the next ten days in conjunction with each Lesson. Quite simply, as the first line says, "**Christ is God's Son as He created Him.**" (W.PII.Q6.What is the Christ?1.1) As such, Christ is the Self we share, uniting us in Oneness. It is what we are. It is the part of the mind that is pure awareness and the part that has never fallen asleep. It is the awake mind that we share and that unites us with each other and with God. We are still a Thought in the Mind of God, having never left our Source, forever innocent, and forever unchanged.

Christ is spoken of in two ways here. While Jesus talks of Christ as pure Spirit in Heaven with no awareness of this world, he also talks of Christ in another way: "**Christ is the link that keeps you one with God, and guarantees that separation is no more than an illusion of despair, for hope forever will abide in Him.**" (W.PII.Q6.2.1) In that sense, Christ is pure Spirit in Heaven as well as the right mind and described in the same way as is the Holy Spirit. Like all terms in the Course, we must remember that what is important is the content of the symbol, which points us to the truth, rather than the form that can be, and often is, debated. What is important is the assurance that Jesus gives us that the separation from God never happened. This is the Atonement Principle, which says there is nothing we can do or have done to change the truth about ourselves. "**He remains untouched by anything the body's eyes perceive.**" (W.PII.Q6.2.4)

In spite of the fact that we think we have changed ourselves, Jesus reminds us that our reality remains untouched. Jesus is aware that we see ourselves as bodies, yet he assures us that our Father placed the means for our salvation within us. We think that we have changed ourselves and have corrupted our innocence. Isn't it a relief to know this is impossible? When we awaken from this dream, we will know that the Self we are is still the same as it has always been. It is the *I Am Self*--perfect, divine, constant, holy, and unchangeable.

Once, we were at a party where everyone was dressed up in masks and costumes of various kinds, yet we knew the mask did not define who was wearing it. In the same way, we have laid an image over God's masterpiece, the Christ, and now believe we have remade ourselves into something we are not. We have come to identify with the image we have carefully constructed. It is a self-concept made up of beliefs, values, opinions, and thoughts. We have come to believe that it is the what we are. But we are not the characters we pretend to be, nor the part we have chosen to play in this dream. The truth is that we cannot remake what God created, no matter how much we try and what masks we seem to wear. The only thing we can do is to hold the belief that what we think about ourselves is true.

We thought we could separate from God and become our own gods and authors of our own lives. We thought the body and the world were safe places to hide from what we perceived as God's wrath, but what safety can there be in a body that is vulnerable, and will decay and die? The ego has sold us a lie, and we have chosen to buy into the lie. We see the body as a place to keep ourselves separate from God, but we know it is anything but a safe place to hide. Yet we don't challenge the ego on its story. Instead, we accept death as a certainty, which is how we try to demonstrate to God that He must be wrong about us. He says we are eternal, but death shows us that we are not eternal after all. Now we must choose whether we accept death as reality or indeed come to see that there is only life.

The ego does not want us to question any of this because its intent is to kill us—its host. Yet its plan is to survive the death of the body. Jesus invites us to look at the source of all this and apply reason to see how none of it makes any sense. He invites us to question the ego's story. We become motivated to do this when we get disillusioned and weary of this game that we call the cycle of birth and death. Course-based forgiveness is the means that we are given to awaken from this dream that we are dreaming. We keep ourselves asleep by still believing that there is something worthwhile to be found in this playground. What we don't want to see is that this world is actually more like a death camp than a playground. We want to play just a little while longer, while faintly recalling somewhere in the mind that there is a more beautiful state awaiting us.

"Home of the Holy Spirit, and at home in God alone, does Christ remain at peace within the Heaven of your holy mind. This is the only part of you that has reality in truth. The rest is dreams. Yet will these dreams be given unto Christ, to fade before His glory and reveal your holy Self, the Christ, to you at last." (W.PII.Q6.3.1-4) Thus, it is up to us to bring our dreams (illusions) to the truth and our darkness to the light, so every hindrance can be removed from the mind that believes it has changed itself. When our forgiveness work is done, we reach the real world, which is the final dream where there is no more choice to be made. **"The Holy Spirit reaches from the Christ in you to all your dreams, and bids them come to Him, to be translated into truth. He will exchange them for the final dream which God appointed as the end of dreams."** (W.PII.Q6.4.1-2)

What would the world look like if we just looked at it with Christ's vision? In this Lesson, we are reminded that what we see is what we choose to see. **"Each day, each hour, every instant, I am choosing what I want to look upon, the sounds I want to hear, the witnesses to what I want to be the truth for me."** (W.271.1.1) If we see a world of pain, misery, suffering, cruelty, and injustice, and we are outraged by all the sin "out there," then we are actually calling forth the witnesses to sin, guilt, and fear. Jesus is saying that if we see the world in this way, we actually want this to be the truth for us! How can this be? Do we really want to see the world as victimizing us and putting us at its mercy? That does not seem possible. At a conscious level, we resist the idea. However, we want the payoff that there is in victimhood, which is why we don't want to take total responsibility for everything that seems to happen to us. Our attraction to being a victim of a cruel world is that we do not have to take responsibility for our own existence and for the separation from God. We can make someone else responsible for our condition. Now they can be seen as the guilty ones.

This morning I went down for coffee, which Don usually has ready for me, but today there was no coffee, and he was focusing on his laptop while I sat down expecting some attention. When he did not even look up, I commented that he seemed very invested in what he was doing. Without even looking up, he told me he was trying to get the laptop connected to the internet. The thought in my mind was that I was being neglected and ignored. The next thought was to ask myself who was it that felt neglected? Of course, I saw that it was the false self. This self wanted to have Don

engaged with me, but who I really am was just observing a neutral event and giving it my meaning. The source of my upset was the thoughts I chose to believe. I was fully in relationship with my own ego. Now I could choose to join with the Holy Spirit instead and be at peace. While we think we are in a relationship with another body, the fact is that we are constantly in a relationship with either the ego or with the Holy Spirit. It is a choice we make again and again. It is not a sin to be engaged with the ego, but it is a mistake that will never bring peace.

Jesus is constantly and consistently inviting us to call forth witnesses to our true innocence and not the false sense of innocence bought at our brother's expense when we decide our brother is guilty. **"Each day, each hour and every instant, even each second, you are deciding between the crucifixion and the resurrection; between the ego and the Holy Spirit."** (T.14.III.4.1) (ACIM OE T.13.VIII.68) And only one choice will bring the experience of the Holy Spirit's joy, peace, and holiness for ourselves.

What we see is all a projection of our own thoughts. It is an outward picture of our inward condition. When we become outraged about anything we see in the world, the cause is never out there. Our outrage is within. We experience outrage as a result of the thoughts we hold about the situation in the world. When we take responsibility for our thoughts as the cause of our outrage, we can bring them to the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that all behaviors that we witness are good. It only means that we are called to see beyond the behaviors and to see the call for love and know the innocence that lies beyond the images. When we are able to see others in this way, we will know that this same love and purity is in us. This is seeing with Christ's vision and not with our own eyes.

I remember watching a TV show called *Joan of Arcadia*, which was about a young woman to whom God appeared in various disguises as ordinary people. Imagine going through our own lives and seeing everyone in disguise. Imagine seeing Jesus disguised as the beggar on the street, or as the guy filling our gas tank, or serving us breakfast, or sharing the bed with us. Seeing the Christ in everyone allows us to see the beauty of our own Self reflected back at us through each brother. Which would you choose? **"Today I choose to look upon what Christ would have me see, to listen to God's Voice, and seek the witnesses to what is true in God's creation."** (W.271.1.2)

Wayne Dyer used to say, "Believe it and you will see it." We need to first change our minds and then we will see witnesses to this new perception. Do you notice how the ego rags on you not to forgive, reminding you continuously that your anger is totally justified? And all the while, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the forgotten song, calling us home. **"Listen,---perhaps you catch a hint of an ancient state not quite forgotten; dim, perhaps, and yet not altogether unfamiliar, like a song whose name is long forgotten, and the circumstances in which you heard completely unremembered. Not the whole song has stayed with you, but just a little wisp of melody, attached not to a person or a place or anything particular. But you remember, from just this little part, how lovely was the song, how wonderful the setting where you heard it, and how you loved those who were there and listened with you."** (T.21.I.6.1-3) (ACIM OE T.21.II.8)

This forgotten song in our right minds is calling us to remember who we are. We are afraid to remember, believing that if we did, we would lose what we value. What we value is our separate self. The result is that we feel lonely and disconnected from each other. We feel separate and different, and while we **"try to reach each other,"** (T.21.I.5.3) (ACIM OE T.21.II.7) we **"fail and fail again"** (T.21.I.5.3) (ACIM OE T.21.II.7) and then adjust to the loneliness. Jesus teaches

us that this need not be, that we can see it another way, and that we can learn to see each other beyond the limitations of what the eyes show us.

I had an experience recently of releasing some judgments and grievances I was holding about my frail mother, who demands a lot of my time and attention. One night, I was tucking her into bed and looked deeply into her eyes and felt a shock of recognition as I literally experienced the eyes of Christ shining their radiance back at me. It was such a powerful moment of joining. I will never forget the impact of the light that shone through her. **"Christ's vision has one law. It does not look upon a body, and mistake it for the Son whom God created. It beholds a light beyond the body; an idea beyond what can be touched, a purity undimmed by errors, pitiful mistakes, and fearful thoughts of guilt from dreams of sin. It sees no separation. And it looks on everyone, on every circumstance, all happenings and all events, without the slightest fading of the light it sees."** (W.158.7)

We are told, **"When experience will come to end your doubting has been set."** (W.158.4.4) We can be assured that when we are ready for this experience, it will come to us, but we must do our part. Today, we are asked to choose the witnesses we will listen to. ***"Father, Christ's vision is the way to You. What He beholds invites Your memory to be restored to me. And this I choose, to be what I would look upon today."*** (W.271.2.1-3)

If this is not what you experience today, it does not make you wrong. It is just a mistaken choice. We can now choose again and again in each situation, whether we look to the ego or the Holy Spirit to interpret what we see.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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