

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 354

**We stand together, Christ and I, in peace
And certainty of purpose. And in Him
Is His Creator, as He is in me.**

Sarah's Commentary:

We don't know ourselves as the Christ that stands in certainty and purpose ***"beyond the reach of time, and wholly free of every law but Yours,"*** (W.354.1.1) with ***"no self except the Christ in me."*** (W.354.1.2) No laws of this world bind us, nor any rules we have made about what is right and what is wrong. We are held back by nothing except our own thinking mind that keeps us invested in issues, worries, and concerns of this world. Why don't we know ourselves as the Christ? Why, after doing all these Lessons, can we still feel so caught up in judgments and attacks and feel so bound by our circumstances? They all seem so real to us. Yet each time we let go of a thought, an opinion, or a need to be right, and each time we step back from the insanity and just laugh at it, our grip on reality, as we think it to be, is loosened. In fact, in that moment, we are freed of ***"every law but Yours."*** (W.354.1.1)

As I have said before, we are not being hurled into Heaven. As long as we are still attached to the individual self, to specialness, and to the world, the process, for the most part, is one of undoing as quickly or as slowly as our readiness. We go as quickly or as slowly as our fear will allow. We have the power to choose and that choice depends on our willingness to let go of our suffering. We must first recognize that our attachments continue to bring us pain. Until we do, we will still hold onto this world and the personal self.

It is all about choice. The Son of God made the initial choice for the ego and for the separation from the love of God. This choice, made in the mind, was then projected and resulted in the making of the world of time, space, and bodies. For a very thorough understanding of how all this came into being, Ken Wapnick's description in the DVD *The Unconscious Mind* is brilliant and highly recommended. He describes how we chose to make this identity of the separated self, seemingly separate from God. This image replaced awareness of the Christ Self that we are. In truth, nothing changed, as nothing we can do can change God's creation, but since we chose the separate identity that we think we are, we now see ourselves as bodies with unique personalities, living in a world Jesus tells us does not exist, except in our imagination. Jesus wants us to see how unhappy we are with the adjustments we have made to this world. He says that we have overlearned the lessons of the ego, which is why our reactions to everything in this world seem so instant. They seem like automatic responses to the situations or events that show up in our lives. Yet even those events are not random. They are perfectly orchestrated in our script for the undoing the self we think we are.

"No one who understands what you have learned, how carefully you learned it, and the pains to which you went to practice and repeat the lessons endlessly, in every form you could conceive of them, could ever doubt the power of your learning skill.

There is no greater power in the world. The world was made by it, and even now depends on nothing else. The lessons you have taught yourself have been so overlearned and fixed they rise like heavy curtains to obscure the simple and the obvious. Say not you cannot learn them. For your power to learn is strong enough to teach you that your will is not your own, your thoughts do not belong to you, and even you are someone else." (T.31.I.3.1-6) (ACIM OE T.31.I.3)

Our overlearning has been so effective that now the simple Lessons of this Course seem very difficult for us. What are these simple Lessons? **"How hard is it to see that what is false can not be true, and what is true can not be false?"** (T.31.I.1.7) (ACIM OE T.31.I.1) Jesus asks us why this should be so hard? The reason is that we have overlearned the complexities of living in this world with a myriad of separate names for things and thousands of rules we have adopted that guide our lives. Our minds have been conditioned so thoroughly that it takes a lot of unlearning and undoing to get the simplicity of the Lesson that what is false cannot be true. While the Lessons of the Workbook truly are simple, they do not seem that way to us and, even if we see the simplicity, they certainly do not seem easy to apply. We struggle with them because we are so identified with the separate self and with this world to which we cling. Until we see that our way will not bring us happiness and peace but only more suffering, we will continue to resist his simple message.

The seeming realities of this world are very convincing to us. Why? They are convincing because the eyes, ears, and all our senses were made by the ego to do a good job of convincing us of the solidity of this world, and the reality of bodies. However, the way we have defined ourselves and our lives is not the truth. According to the Course, I am just a dream figure in a dream I am dreaming. When I step out of this dream, I can smile in quiet amusement that I ever thought any of this was real. Slowly, we are starting to realize that we are just dreaming it all, and the story we tell ourselves about our lives was already over long ago. We are looking back on a journey that is already over. In fact, it never was. Right now, I can't conceive of this to be so. I am waking slowly from the darkness of my wrong-minded thinking and from a past, where I felt totally at the mercy of the world and of events that seemed to be happening to me and increasingly realizing that it is all my hallucination.

Now I see that **"Trials are but lessons that you failed to learn presented once again, so where you made a faulty choice before you now can make a better one, and thus escape all pain that what you chose before has brought to you."** (T.31.VIII.3.1) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.87) How beautiful is that? Everything that shows up provides us another opportunity to experience the holy instant instead of the seeming ravages of time. In that choice, we can save thousands of years. There is an unseen force that works through us all so when we choose peace, where previously we chose judgment, we are momentarily lifted out of time and space. How do I know this? I know this because every time I change my mind about the way the ego wants me to go and instead choose the Holy Spirit's response of forgiveness and release, miracles spring forth and show me that what I thought was reality is not. Instead of anguish, there is now a sweet release.

I recall hearing an interview with Christopher Plummer, who said the reason he and his wife lasted 42 years, after several previous short-term relationships on his part, is because, when they had a serious, screaming fight, they both ended up on the floor, rolling with laughter. What they were seeing was the drama and how well they played their angry roles. When they saw how good they were in enacting these roles, they could do nothing but laugh at their academy performances. When there is a problem that we are holding onto, it is because we have forgotten to laugh at the antics of the ego. We take it all so seriously. It is just a play, and we play our part with such

seriousness until we can see the nonsense of it and recognize that what we have made is all false. What we fight about is to be right, but we are never right. We try to keep the image of ourselves intact.

It does seem like there are others in our dream who are in their separate bodies and who make their own decisions, sometimes seemingly to our detriment. And yes, this brings forth grievances, where we feel like we are at their mercy. I experience pain and suffering when I believe this and I have dreams of retaliation. If and when I act on those dreams, I bring forth more guilt into my mind and certainly more fear, but I can smile at the silliness of it all when I step out of the dream. Whenever I choose another way and release the dream of retaliation, I experience the peace behind every problem, waiting for my acceptance. Thus, I recognize that Christ and I truly do stand together in the certainty of purpose.

With each choice that I make for healing, I find the world does become a happier dream. We are too afraid to wake up to God in one big episode. His Love has given us the Holy Spirit, Who calls to us gently to wake up to a happier dream where our fear is reduced to the point where we are ready to take the next step. As we do, we move up the same ladder that we used to descend into the darkness of this world. In reality, of course, we are still at home in God; but while we believe in the separation, we fear God's retaliation. We are like the son who believes he has emptied his father's bank account and has run away and has squandered his money and is now afraid to return home. Believing this, of course, we are not only afraid of his punishment, but we feel deep feelings of guilt and unworthiness. We believe we have changed our pristine nature and can never experience the beautiful purity of our innocence again. Yet we long for this state. We think it comes through death, but nothing comes through death. It comes through forgiveness.

The story of guilt is not something we experience at a conscious level. It is in our minds and explains our underlying feeling that we have done something wrong and that there is something deeply wrong with us. No matter how much we try to find our place in this world, we can never get it right. We have made up stories about the origins of our discomfort, blaming our parents, teachers, bosses, spouses, germs, politicians, our past lives, and our genes. Yet we set it up this way so we could have something outside of ourselves to blame for our condition. We need these people and situations as receptacles for our guilt. If we didn't have them, we would have to take responsibility for the guilt of separation, and that just seems too big. We would then need to take responsibility for it all and recognize that we attack and hate simply because we want to! We could no longer hold anyone responsible for making us the way we are. Our healing is thus about reclaiming responsibility for everything that seems to happen to us. In doing so, we have a powerful healing opportunity, as now we can see that we are no longer victims at the mercy of a powerful world. We are the ones who are powerful. The world is not.

Christ is the Self that shares Its purpose with Its Creator. It shares All That Is with All---a reflection of the first lesson of the Holy Spirit, "**To Have, Give All to All**" (T.6.V.A) (ACIM OE T.6.V.a) Thus, we see the Self that we are in everyone we look upon. There is no separation. We are like broken parts of a complete picture, all seeming to be separate from each other, yet the whole picture is what we are. Each broken piece contains the whole, just like a holographic image. In fact, the whole world is this holographic image with nothing real going on here. **"What if you recognized this world is an hallucination? What if you really understood you made it up? What if you realized that those who seem to walk about in it, to sin and die, attack and murder and destroy themselves, are wholly unreal? Could you have faith in what you see if you accepted this? And would you see it?"** (T.20.VIII.7.3-7) (ACIM OE T.20.IX.73)

We are now taking small steps back up the ladder of separation, forgiving what is not true. It is the way out of the cycle of sin, guilt, and fear. True forgiveness requires us to understand that what our brother did has not really happened because there is no world. It is all a dream. What this requires is for us to look with honesty and courage at our dramas, our roles, our grievances, and our judgments. We need to constantly watch our minds for feelings of envy, comparisons with others, jealousies, worries, pride, specialness, and attack of any kind. We must be willing to bring these dark spots of pain and anguish to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in our mind and quietly awaits our acceptance of the truth. He is the Truth. He is the Answer that was given to us the moment we made the choice for the ego.

"In every difficulty, all distress, and every perplexity Christ calls to you and gently says, 'My brother, choose again.' He would not leave one source of pain unhealed, nor any image left to veil the truth. He would remove all misery from you whom God created altar unto joy. He would not leave you comfortless, alone in dreams of hell, but would release your mind from everything that hides His face from you. His holiness is yours because He is the only Power that is real in you. His strength is yours because He is the Self that God created as His only Son." (T.31.VIII.3.2-7) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.87)

What is said here is that we can turn away from the truth of what we are as the Christ, but Christ will never turn away from us. We are one Self, united with our Creator, thinking that we are something else that has been made by the influences of our lives.

"The images you make cannot prevail against what God Himself would have you be. Be never fearful of temptation, then, but see it as it is; another chance to choose again, and let Christ's strength prevail in every circumstance and every place you raised an image of yourself before. For what appears to hide the face of Christ is powerless before His majesty, and disappears before His holy sight. The saviors of the world, who see like Him, are merely those who choose His strength instead of their own weakness, seen apart from Him. They will redeem the world, for they are joined in all the power of the Will of God. And what they will is only what He wills." (T.31.VIII.4.1-6) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.88)

Today, whenever we are tempted to throw away our peace by choosing judgment, anger, irritation, or frustration, we can stop and remember that what we are responding to is false. Everyone is simply offering us another opportunity to look at the unhealed places in our minds. We can, therefore, be thankful for those who bring to us these lessons, since without them, how would we learn where we need healing? Without them, how would we see the self-hatred that we have sealed off from our awareness? We can't do this alone. We need our brothers and sisters so we will see where there are still pockets of self-hatred in us. They are our mighty companions, who have been chosen to collaborate with us on our journey home together. There are no accidents as to who is in your life for this purpose. Everything is perfectly orchestrated for your healing and awakening. Today, I choose a day of joy, inspiration, and grace that I may be led from thoughts of death and destruction to thoughts of love.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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