# A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj

July 23rd 2017

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Good evening. And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the Internet.

The last time we were together I talked about this time that everyone is in—this juncture, as it were, between the past and the future. I did not use the word "change-line," but in effect there is a passage occurring across a change-line. The passage seems to be identified as breakdown, disintegration—not out of carelessness but actually by conscious design.

It seems to be being consciously, actively promoted in many significant places around your globe—independence, isolation, walls, boundaries, limits of passage, limits to freedom of movement in the belief that independence will establish strength, protection, safety and peace. And more than anything the dollar, the ruble, the franc, whatever the rate of exchange is in any country, seems to be being used as the justification.

Independent countries "as businesses" is a very creative but very deleterious shift of definition because it puts everything on the basis of competition. And it puts the dollar or the ruble or the franc—or whatever the rate of exchange—it puts it in a preferential position, and somewhere *down the line* is humanity, Brotherhood, you and me playing second fiddle to the almighty rate of exchange and the competition, which is inseparable [from] it.

This is what *appears* to be happening. And it seems to be very frightening. Not to those who value the dollar or the rate of exchange so much, but to those who are human, to those who are brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers and husbands and wives and those who wake up in the morning and are faced with the opportunity and the need to be the presence of love because that's what brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, daughters and sons do, that's the nature of relationships, that's the nature of love.

And I pointed out last time that in spite of the disintegration that appears to be happening and which appears to be being consciously promoted, what's really happening is unification. It's a miracle. It's a shift of perception. And I pointed out that when you get to the limit of a belief, when you get to the limit of an illusion, the illusion seems to become aggressively assertive. And the noise it makes seems to cover up the actual event, which is *the end* of the illusion, which is *the miracle*, which is *the shift of perception*, which, when it finally comes, is a sudden shift of perception. And this is where we are. And I referred to this as the last miracle. And what is the last miracle? Atonement.

That is what we're smack dab in the middle of. And you and I and everyone who *feels*—everyone who knows the *experience* of love, everyone who has *the capacity to care*—is going to be a participant in this shift. And so this is what we're going to continue to pursue this evening.

Before we continue, before we go into the book I want to remind everyone that I have pointed out that the Holy Spirit is your divinity held in trust while you dally with the ego—while you play around with the idea of being an independent thinker, where you have, in the middle of the infinitude of you, created like "a bubble." And everything inside the bubble, you are saying is "you." And everything outside of the bubble is "not you." And inside this bubble you are creating imaginations, concepts, and you're joining with another brother or sister who is doing the same thing, and coming to mutual agreements about what everything "is" and what "isn't" either one of you.

And so, with your being walled off, separated from, independent from the infiniteness of you . . . well, because the infiniteness of you can't stop being what It is, It has been given a new name—the Holy Spirit, your divinity held in trust, *being what It is* while you're ignoring It . . . but constantly insinuating Itself through the bubble.

The wall of separation is so thin and flimsy that breaking it is very easy. But in order for it to break without being reinforced, every brother and sister who has chosen to create their bubble must *want* to break it. And as we have discussed incessantly, the means of breaking the bubble is the holy instant, which *A Course in Miracles* expounds on and presents for clarity.

The holy instant I have also referred to as the two-step. Step one, you shut up. You "become still," to put it nicely. But you shut up. And the second step is, you inquire, you *desire* to know the Truth beyond your present sense or definition of Truth.

Now, there is also something else which I have shared, which is a modification of what is called "The Daily Prayer" in Christian Science. This Daily Prayer fleshes out, or gives more meaning to the two-step so that it isn't as mysterious: "Well, how do I do it?" "What's it about?" And the Daily Prayer goes this way:

"Thy Will, not mine be done. Let the reign of divine Truth, Life and Love be established in me and rule out of me all self-will. And may Thy Word enrich the affections of all mankind and govern them." <sup>1</sup>

That's the meaning and the movement and the practice of the twostep.

Now, some time ago we read the section that we're going to go into tonight. And I'm going back because it is so simply put, and it is more understandable now than when we read it the first time, because there are so many other things we have discussed in the meantime. It is on page 341 of the Sparkly book, the second full paragraph. And it says:

It is impossible to remember God in secret and alone.<sup>2</sup>

... [chuckling] in other words, inside a wall you put around yourselves, in isolation where Brotherhood means nothing and there's no involvement in it, if possible.

It is impossible to remember God in secret and alone. For remembering Him means you are NOT alone, . .

Of course, you will not discover *that* until you arrive at a point where you're willing to reach out to something outside your present definition of yourself and say, "Help." The moment you feel the need and abandon your sovereign position of control over your life and you say, "Help," at that very moment you've broken the bubble, you've penetrated it momentarily at the very least, and you've allowed that you're not alone. And that opens the door to communion.

It is impossible to remember God in secret and alone. For remembering Him means you are NOT alone, and willing to remember it.

That's the key: willing to remember it.

Take no thought for yourself, for no thought you hold IS for yourself.

... meaning the divine one that you Are. You take thought for the self you *made up*, which is not You—which is not the Son of God or the Daughter of God. It is an imaginary you that you flesh out and seem to create by virtue of thinking thoughts that God never thought, thus seeming to bring into existence something quite separate and apart from your Source. But it's not your Self.

Now . . .

If you would remember your Father, let the Holy Spirit order your thoughts, . .

See? Now, you must remember that the Holy Spirit is your divinity held in trust while you're dallying with the ego. But . . .

If you would remember your Father, [you must] let the Holy Spirit order your thoughts, . .

... you must let the Holy Spirit order your thoughts. You must let that which you divinely Are order your thoughts, . .

... and give only the answer with which He answers you.

... the only answer your divinity gives you.

Everyone seeks for love as you do, and knows it not unless he joins with you in seeking it.

From where? From something outside the definitions that either one of you created for yourselves.

If you undertake the search together, you bring with you a light so powerful that what you see is GIVEN meaning.

When you are looking with the vision that your divinity—the Holy Spirit—provides, everything you see is illuminated a new to you who have not looked at what things really are for a very long time.

The lonely journey fails because it has excluded what it would FIND.

You see? What you would find is the Truth, what you would find is the Kingdom of Heaven that is your Home, what you would find is the conscious experience of Reality. But as long as you were insisting on making it up, creating an imaginary different reality from Creation, you were blinded to Reality and to your Self. You see?

As God communicates to the Holy Spirit in you, so does the Holy Spirit translate His communications THROUGH you so YOU can understand them.

Isn't that something? This is very important.

It is impossible to remember God in secret and alone.

It's impossible to know the Truth in secret and alone. If you want to know the Truth, you have to want to know the Truth for your brother. Until you want to know the Truth for and about your brother—until you want to know that—you will see the definitions you have applied to him. And you will be influenced by the definitions he has given to himself. But when you want to know the Truth of your brother because you love your brother, and it's being too uncomfortable to be unconscious of it any longer, then the Holy Spirit will reveal to you what to share with your brother. And as that happens, it is revealed to you. And that's the way Atonement works. It's utterly simple.

God has no secret communications, for everything of Him is perfectly open, and freely accessible to all, being FOR all.

Not just those inside the wall, not just for those kept outside, not just for those who are identified as different, or not just for you who is different from everyone else.

Nothing lives in secret, and what you would hide from the Holy Spirit is nothing.

[Chuckling] It's pure imagination, pure fantasy. It's nothing.

Every interpretation YOU would lay upon a brother is senseless.

And likewise, every interpretation you would lay upon any part of your world or universe is senseless.

Let the Holy Spirit SHOW him [your brother] to you,

Isn't that the point of the holy instant? "Father, show me the more of what You're being right there where my brother is than what I'm presently seeing."

Let the Holy Spirit SHOW him to you, and teach you both his love and need for love. Neither his mind NOR YOURS holds more than these two orders of thought.

Love and the call for Love—the need for Love.

The miracle is the recognition that this is true.

You know, your function is to Love or answer the call for Love. It is for you to see Love or the call for Love in your brothers and sisters and not to see what you've come to believe about him because of the definitions, the awful definitions, the critical, the arrogant definitions you've applied to him.

Where there is love, your brother must give it to you because of what it IS. But . . .

... and here's the important part.

But where there is NEED for love, ...

... which, of course, would come to you as a call for Love—which means a behavior that is questionable or mean-spirited, not loving ...

But where there is NEED for love, YOU must give it because of what YOU are.

You see? Where there is a call for love, . .

... where there is NEED for love, YOU must give it because of what YOU are.

Not what you believe yourself not to be, not the definition you've built up in the world about what you are, but the divine one, the Son of God or the Daughter of God that you Are. You, who you divinely are

right here and right now, are the light of the world. It's your function to illuminate love, to illuminate Truth.

Long ago we said this course will teach you what you are, restoring to you your identity.

Restoring You to you—what is called the Holy Spirit, the rest of You, the Wholeness of You that never stopped being the Wholeness of You. And how do you do it? By being involved with your brother, by caring, by extending consideration, by removing walls and barriers and any practice of privacy that you might have enjoyed practicing.

Long ago we said this course will teach you what you are, restoring to you your identity. We have already learned that this identity is shared.

It's that in which *all* exists—worlds upon worlds, brothers upon brothers, sisters upon sisters all embraced in the conscious experience of Being that you Are.

The miracle becomes the MEANS of sharing it. By supplying your identity wherever it is NOT recognized, YOU will recognize it.

There it is again. What you need to know you need to give. Wow! That sounds like an impossibility, doesn't it? What you need to learn you must give . . . um-m . . . "what you *don't know*, you must give," is what it's saying.

And God Himself, Who wills to be with His Son forever, will bless each recognition of His Son with all the love He holds for him. Nor will the power of ALL His Love be absent from any miracle you offer to His Son.

Now how do you make an offer of a miracle to a Son of God, a Brother, a Sister? You begin with an intent, a desire—not an intellectual project but something arising out of a need felt in you to connect, to be not isolated any longer. How, then, can there be any order of difficulty among them?

... among miracles.

Now, the subheading here is:

The Test of Truth

And it begins with something quite amazing, utterly simple but not what you would logically expect. I'm going to back up for the flow.

And God Himself, Who wills to be with His Son forever, will bless each recognition of His Son . . .

... meaning every recognition you engage in of another who is God's Son or Daughter.

... will bless each recognition of His Son with all the love He holds for him.

... which will come through you.

Nor will the power of ALL His Love be absent from any miracle you offer to His Son.

Your Brother or Sister.

How, then, can there be any order of difficulty among them?

Here's the key sentence:

Yet the essential thing is learning that YOU DO NOT KNOW.

Oh, I know you've grown up. You've learned from your parents. You've gone to school. You've been educated. You've learned many things. And life has taught you lessons. And you think you know. But here's the crux. Anything that you know that was not provided by the

Father, because He is the Creator of All That actually Is, is false knowledge. It isn't Knowing anything truly.

Creation is the only thing available to you to be conscious of. But when Creation is overlaid by definitions arrived at through logic and reasoning and imagination, but not a connection with the Source of Creation, that knowledge is meaningless.

The essential thing is learning that *you do not know*. That's a hard one . . . because you each have such devotion to what you've learned. And you depend upon what you've learned to have some sense of stability and order and control. But if there's no yielding to God, if there's no partnership, if there's no camaraderie, if there's no union with God, you're living in an illusion—you are deluded for the time being until something occurs that causes you to feel a need for something you truly don't have a definition for, so that this need causes you to cry out for help, and not arrogantly attempt to be self-sufficient!

Knowledge is power, and all power is of God. You who have tried to keep power for yourselves . . .

... you who have tried to keep power for yourselves ...

... have lost it.

You've simply ignored it. You stopped paying attention to it. You've stopped owning it because you're trying to create an independent sense of power that's to *your* personal, private credit. And so, you've lost the power of knowledge that is inherent in, inseparable from God's Knowing of his Creation.

You still have the power, but you have interposed so much between it and your AWARENESS of it that you cannot use it.

You see?

Everything you have taught yourselves . . .

... by virtue of reasoning and logic and imagination.

Everything you have taught yourselves has made your power more and more obscure to you.

And heavens, it's only in the light of [chuckling] the Truth that has become obscure to you, or to those in your world, that at this very moment the attempts to disintegrate and to establish independence would be seen as the means to create safety and stability.

You know not WHAT it is . . .

... power ...

... nor WHERE. You have made a semblance of power and a show of strength so pitiful that it MUST fail you.

And it is failing you—not you personally, in the larger sense that is occurring in the world, but you personally as you apply it to the way *you approach* what is going on in the world.

For power is not a seeming strength, and truth is beyond semblance of any kind. Yet all that stands between you and the power of God in you is but your learning of the false, and your attempts to undo the true.

You've learned the false by creating fantasies and then calling the fantasies true and operating on the basis of those fantasies. Whew! When you get to that place where you're at the end of your rope, where you feel the need, then you finally arrive at the point where you can . . .

Be willing, then, for all of it to be undone, and be glad that you are not bound to it forever. For you have taught yourselves how to imprison the Son of God, . .

... the Son of God that you Are ...

... a lesson so unthinkable that only the insane, in deepest sleep, could even dream of it.

That sounds like a terrible indictment. But, you see, you can't be insane. And you have not stopped being the Son or Daughter of God and, therefore, the recognition that you're engaged in something that simply does not work and cannot work means that no matter what words are used to describe that insane state of mind, you have an answer, one built right into the very center of your Being—your Self—which at the moment is recognizable as the Holy Spirit.

Can God learn how NOT to be God? And can His Son, given all power by Him, learn to be powerless? What have you taught yourselves that you can possibly prefer to keep, in place of what you HAVE and what you ARE?

... divinely speaking. What you have taught yourselves that you prefer is the "hit," the ego strokes that make you feel important and worthwhile and respectable, and all that is good, and [chuckles] the fact that all of it has been created by you *out of nothing!* You prefer that because it's exciting, it's stimulating and it's also constantly occurring in a state of fear because you can lose it. And the only reason you can lose it is because it wasn't Real in the first place, it isn't what was your Birthright in the first place.

Atonement . . .

... the last miracle ...

... teaches you how to escape forever from everything that you have taught yourselves in the past by showing you only what you are NOW.

How can you see what you are now if you don't let go of all the thoughts, all the definitions that you have accumulated, that you wrap around yourselves for your identity? The present is obscured by a garment of memories made up of ideas that weren't gathered from communion with God. And so, if you're willing to look straight at it, it

means that there's all the justification in the world for daring to say, "Father, I wish to see the more of what You're being, than what I'm presently seeing. I wish to see Reality as it Is instead of Reality as I have defined It." Because it's in that request, it's in that desire . . . felt . . . that communication is opened up, relationship can be experienced, because you have abandoned the arrogant independence. You see?

Learning HAS BEEN accomplished before its effects are manifest.

That's always the way it is. Learning comes first and then you experience the effects of it. And so, if you learn that life is rough, that life is unfair, that it takes great personal strength to survive and it's a constant battle, you will have the effects of that. But if you abandon the definitions you make up and you say, "Father, what is the truth here?" And through the Holy Spirit—your divinity held in trust—the Father says, "Be at peace. I am All There Is of You. And you and I are not threatened, or vulnerable, or incapable of seeing how loveable everything is, and how we can dare to extend that love without fear. Be at peace." Then you will have the effects of that.

But the learning must come first. The willingness must be there first.

Learning is therefore in the past, but its influence determines the present by giving it whatever meaning it holds for you.

Again, if the meaning it holds for you comes from your own determination, it will be flawed, it will be unsafe, without your defending it, and you will always be afraid of losing control.

YOUR learning gives the present no meaning at all.

You know what? That's a very simple sentence and we could stop here with that.

YOUR learning gives the present no meaning at all.

It happens to be the simple truth. Going back to the top of this section:

[Yet] the essential thing is learning that YOU DO NOT KNOW.

Such a simple thing. If you're willing to consider the possibility that you do not know in its fullness what the Father is being as all of Creation, including you, then it all awaits you the moment you're willing to consider the seemingly irrational possibility that you don't know anything at all, and there's no value in what you think you know.

And you know what? I'm encouraging everyone to consider that possibility before the need becomes so great that you do it because you no longer have a choice—because you are hurting so much because the illusion is collapsing, and your definitions aren't keeping you safe any longer because the Atonement is unfolding.

# Here's another simple statement:

Nothing you have ever learned can help you understand the present, or teach you how to undo the past. Your past IS what you have taught yourselves. LET IT ALL GO. Do not attempt to understand any event, or anything, or anyone in its light, for the light of darkness by which you try to see can ONLY obscure.

Now, you know what the simplicity of all this boils down to? It boils down to the meaninglessness and the uselessness of thinking!

In Hawaii, the Hawaiians have a phrase, "talking story." They talk story. And you know what? Thinking is a way of talking story. You think and create a story about what things mean, or what things will mean, or what you mean and then you believe the story you frighten yourself with. Or, or you build up, [chuckling] you create, a sense of well-being by creating a story that doesn't involve threat but involves personal capabilities that you have in your own right.

The culprit is thinking. And Knowing is never the result of thinking. *Knowledge is never the result of thinking*. Knowledge is a discovery. Knowledge is a revelation. Knowledge is an "aha" experience. But "aha" experiences don't happen until you are, in one way or another, free of the arrogance of self-determination, and in a moment of, we'll say, ego weakness you let something else in. The wall goes down. The boundary isn't reinforced. Independence isn't valued quite as much as it was. And then in the total absence of thinking, the light bulb goes on. An "aha" occurs, a miracle happens—a sudden shift of perception.

What we're talking about here is a willingness to go through your day without valuing thinking, without engaging in thinking, but insisting instead to maintain a silence, I'm going to call it a "silent attentiveness." A silent attentiveness arising out of a felt desire to know the Truth that the Holy Spirit—your divinity—will reveal to you in that moment about what is going on in that moment truly and how to behave relative to it.

You don't do this so that you can have new data to *think* about and then resume your habit of living, controlling your life based upon thinking with a new habit, with new details, new definitions. We're talking about learning to stand at the threshold of the unknown forever, because you want to know what God is "thinking"—for lack of better words—because you want to know what Knowledge is. You want to experience Creation without distortion, without the distortion that accompanies your thinking about it, and thinking that thinking is valuable.

This is what Atonement is about. And this is the miracle that is unfolding on your globe with you . . . and you . . . and you . . . wherever you are on the globe. Do not misunderstand what is happening. And be willing to be disciplined when it comes to the temptation to think.

Now, Paul, has been learning something very valuable. And that is that there is a red flag that always goes up whenever he or anyone else—whenever *you* engage in thinking. And that is *emotion*. When fear or anger or righteousness, or the attempt to assert . . . the feeling of the *need* to assert powerful action . . . when *that* comes to you, you're hooked. And you've already become hooked by virtue of

thinking, because the minute you think, you've abandoned your groundedness in your Being.

If you become emotional about what you call a problem, or if you become emotional about something absolutely wonderful that has happened, *you're off balance*. That which is a problem cannot successfully be dealt with in the presence of emotion because it blinds you to simple intelligence and the ability to hear what the Holy Spirit is revealing about how to be in the presence of what "the story you've told yourself" has caused you to be afraid of.

Whenever you start feeling emotion, you can say, [snaps fingers] "Aha! I have started thinking. And as long as I am thinking, I cannot possibly here the Voice for Truth. And I am not going to put myself in that vulnerable position." And then, even though you *don't* know the answer but you *think* you do—and what you think the answer is, is scaring you—in *spite* of that, *set it down*, because it's a misinterpretation, it's a misunderstanding of what you're faced with.

You're either faced with Love or a call for Love. And you want to be able to answer the call for Love from the Love in you that reveals how to be the transforming presence that removes the threat or the problem. But it won't happen if you don't abandon the confidence you think you need to have in what you already believe. It's that simple. "Oh, I am feeling fear. Wow, I'm going to stop, even though the fear seems justifiable. I'm going to stop because the fear is not the peace that is needed in which clarity will be experienced, because it naturally flows when I have not created a wall of defense by indulging in fear and thinking." You see?

Yes, when you do that you *don't* know the answer, but you stand at the threshold of the answer by virtue of doing it. And you stand there at the threshold of the answer . . . ad infinitum. And it's God revealing "God as All" over . . . and over . . . except it's, "Behold, I make all things new . . . new . . . new . . . new . . . new . . .

You see how simple this is? And how important it is?

If you begin to practice it, you'll find it's not easy when fear or anger or self-righteousness, or judgment comes up. But if you recognize the presence of fear, anxiety—the presence of emotion in you—and let that be the trigger that snaps you out of your fascination with the *details* of what you're angry about, or fearful of, *then you will find yourself extricated from the story you've told yourself.* And you'll be able to give your attention to the Holy Spirit, through which God speaks to you because it is your divinity held in trust while you're feeling separated, and choosing to be separated.

Put no confidence at all in darkness . . .

... meaning the things you've imaginatively created.

Put no confidence at all in darkness to illuminate your understanding, for if you do you contradict the light, and thereby THINK you see the darkness.

You thereby THINK—"talking story,"—describing darkness, describing what isn't true and scaring yourself to death.

Yet darkness cannot BE seen, for it is nothing more than a condition in which seeing becomes impossible.

When you are thinking, it becomes impossible to Know, because Knowing is revealed by God through the Holy Spirit to you so that you might extend it as a blessing upon your world and, by doing it, *heal yourself*—heal the misperception.

You who have not yet brought all of the darkness you have taught yourselves unto the light in you can hardly judge the truth and value of this course.

... or of the holy instant, or of the fact that the Holy Spirit is your divinity, you holy Son or Daughter of God.

Yet God did not abandon you. And so you have another lesson sent from Him, ALREADY learned for every Child of light by Him to Whom God gave it. Who did God give it to? You. But it's the "Holy Spirit" part of you, that you have disowned. But nevertheless, it *has* been given to you, the one you *divinely Are*. And the one you divinely Are *has it right now*, available to illuminate the one hiding in the closet, the one hiding in the middle of a false definition, the one hiding inside a bubble . . . so easily popped.

This lesson shines with God's glory, for in it lies His power, which He shares so gladly with His Son. [With you.]

Now, this is a lot to think about. [Laughing] This is a lot to absorb, and yet it's not a lot at all, because it's simply the need to recognize that you have *two* choices available to you as part of your Atonement. Those two choices are between "thinking" and "Listening." It is the choice to Listen and not think. And to Listen standing at the edge of what you don't know, with faith that you will be infilled with the Answer, with the Knowledge necessary to be fully in the present without being at odds with it in any way, so that you might be in relationship with your brother and sister and the world and the universe without fear, with peace and with the capacity to relate to and with everyone with embrace, with the willingness to be with everyone, with the desire to see the Presence of God there, so that you might not introduce anything foreign to Creation, and thus, be an agent for change who heals himself, who is transformed by his or her willingness to risk the chance that, as the saying goes, "letting go and letting God"<sup>3</sup> will be the answer.

Again, the unity, the unification which is embracing the world against the ego's will, will be facilitated by each one practicing the holy instant, beginning to choose throughout the day for Listening instead of thinking, and valuing the red flag of emotion when it occurs—no matter how hooked you seem to be *by* the emotion in the moment—so that you can shift your attention from the emotion and the details of what have gotten you upset, and give your attention to the Source of clarity, the Source of what the Truth is that is not frightening, that is not threatening and that is of such infinite power, because it's Love, that it promotes the Atonement, the sudden shift of perception.

Now, I encourage everyone to read to the end of this chapter. But we will continue next week picking right up from where we left off. Take some time to see how simple the message is that we're talking about, so that as you go through your days this week you let the presence of emotion alert you to the fact that you are thinking quite on your own, which you do not want to do, because it's the way you maintain your divorce from God and keep the experience of orphanhood, in all of its miserableness, going.

I love you very much, and I look forward to being with you next time.

### References:

<sup>1</sup> Manual of the Mother Church First Church of Christ, Scientist Link: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page%3AManual\_of\_The\_Mother\_Church.djvu/64

### **ACIM References:**

Chapter 14 – Section: THE SHIFT TO MIRACLES

<sup>2</sup> Sparkly Book – p.341, 2<sup>nd</sup> Full Par./JCIM – p.143, 3<sup>rd</sup> Full Par./CIMS – p.286, Last Par.

Chapter 14 – Section: THE EQUALITY OF MIRACLES

First Edition – p.? / Second Edition – p.295, Par.10

<sup>3</sup> Bible verses about "Letting go": <a href="https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Bible-Verses-About-Letting-Go/">https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Bible-Verses-About-Letting-Go/</a>

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