

# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

## STUDY GROUP

### WITH RAJ

August 27th 2011

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

We ended up last week with the thought from the *Course* that:

*In any situation in which you are uncertain, the first thing to consider, very simply, is "What do I want to come of this? What is it FOR?" The clarification of the goal belongs at the BEGINNING, for it is this which will determine the outcome. In the ego's procedure, this is reversed. The SITUATION becomes the determiner of the outcome, which can be anything. The reason for this disorganized approach is evident. The ego does not know what it WANTS to come of it. It is aware of what it does NOT want, but only that. It has no positive goal at all.*

*What do I want to come of this?*

Don't get trapped by the question. Because it sounds like you're asking your self—you're puny little ego sense of self: "What do I want to come of this?" And that's not what we're talking about. We're talking about the practice of the two-step. We're talking about abandoning your dependence upon your best thinking.

And in the place of that, in the silence of your thinking—the absence of your thinking—enquiring of the Father: "What is the truth here *or* what do I want to come of this?" That's the question you take to the Holy Spirit when you hesitate and do the two-step and practice the holy instant. *That's how you practice it.*

"Father, what do I want to come of this? Father, as Your Son or Your Daughter, what do I want to come of this situation?" You see? "What is it for? I want to know. I want to know Your Perspective because Your Perspective is the Birthright You have given me. Your Perspective is the Perspective that is inherent in me and I do not want to continue to act as though there's no connection between us. And in fact, I want the connection to be so solid that what I'm asking for is from Your Perspective, what do I want to come of this? What is it for?" You see?

That's the key. It isn't just that you ask ahead of time before you act, "What do I want the outcome to be?" It's that you ask, "*Father, what do I as Your Son or Daughter want the outcome to be?*" You see? It's an act of joining.

Where just saying to yourself, "What do I want the outcome to be?" is an independent act and isn't what this is about.

So . . .

*Without a clearcut, positive goal, set at the outset, . .*

. . . not by you, not by your determination, but by virtue of your asking, “Father what is the positive goal here?”

*. . . the situation just seems to happen, . .*

. . . without a clear-cut practice of the two-step . . .

*. . . the situation just seems to happen, and makes no sense until it has ALREADY happened. THEN you look back at it, and try to piece together what it must have meant.*

And you end up engaging in conjecture about *what it must have meant*.

“ . . . Well it must’ve had this meaning . . . it must have been the Democrats or the Republicans . . . or it must’ve been the greed . . . or it must have been this or that that was responsible for it . . . ”

What was responsible for it was, that the two-step wasn’t practiced. That’s all. No one said, “Father, what is the truth here?”

*. . . you look back at it, and try to piece together what it must have meant. And you will be WRONG. Not only is your judgment in the past, but you have no idea what SHOULD happen. No goal was set with which to bring the means in line. And now the only judgment left to make is whether or not the ego likes it; is it acceptable, or does it call for vengeance?*

Those are the only two questions that can be asked afterwards, and asked of the ego.

*The absence of a criterion for outcome, set IN ADVANCE, . .*

What? By virtue of having done the two-step, having listened, and having heard . . .

*. . . makes understanding doubtful and evaluation impossible.*

On the other hand, if we reverse it, if you have done the two-step, if you have listened, and you have heard, it makes understanding inevitable and evaluation completely possible.

*The value of deciding in advance what you WANT to happen . . .*

. . . what the Father discloses to you that you want to happen . . .

*. . . is simply that you will perceive the situation as a means to MAKE it happen.*

Now I shared a story some time ago about two shoe companies, each sending a shoe salesman to Africa. And three months go by and one of the companies realizes that

there's no productivity, there are no sales going on. And that company sends a dispatch to its salesman, it says: "What's the problem?"

Well, a dispatch comes back and the salesman said, "It's obvious, nobody wears shoes here." What can you expect, was the meaning.

Now on the other hand, the other salesman had had sales that skyrocketed through the roof. And at the end of three months, although the company was very grateful, they wrote and said, "How do you account for all of the sales?" He says, "Well, it's obvious . . . no one wears shoes here." You see?

Now, here's the thing. You can't take this example literally absolutely. But it expresses an idea. First of all, let's say that the first fellow did not do the two-step, walked into a situation, read the situation according to his best judgments and his experience. He says, "Wow, these people have a heritage of going barefoot. It has meaning to them. It conveys to them a groundedness, a connectedness with Mother Earth and so on. We're not going to be able to overcome this kind of conditioning."

This fellow did not do the two-step. He ended up listening to his best judgments. And what was he listening to? He was listening to the voice for fear. He was not listening to the Voice for truth. He was coming entirely from his orphan mentality—no connection to anything divine, himself, no capacity or inclination to look for divine purpose in the situation.

On the other hand, we could say that the other salesman did the two-step and heard the truth, "nobody wears shoes here. It's open for discovery and sales and providing these people with something they didn't know they could have but they will like." You see?

Now, the interesting thing about this example is that both of them heard the same answer: "Nobody wears shoes here."

That answer you could say, was the truth. But one of them heard the truth through the voice for fear, in that there was no means to experience fruition and fulfillment and meaningfulness. And so he had a meaningless experience. And his connection with those in Africa that he could have sold shoes to also had a meaningless experience where there could have been a different one.

Okay. On the other hand, the other salesman listened, he heard the truth and the truth heard through the Voice for truth did not have an impediment in it that said nothing will work out, there's no opportunity here. And so the two had a totally different experience.

Now . . .

*The value of deciding in advance what you WANT to happen is simply that you will perceive the situation as a means to MAKE it happen.*

The one salesman who was successful saw no reason, found no negative thoughts to cause him to feel that he had a problem to overcome. He simply saw opportunity that he could *allow* to occur and bless everyone.

*You will therefore make every effort . . .*

. . . which he did, the salesman . . .

*. . . to overlook what interferes with the accomplishment of your objective, and concentrate on everything which helps you meet it.*

You see?

Now sometimes the truth will be two different answers. But in this case, and it's helpful to know this, the truth that is the same answer heard through the voice for fear or heard through the Voice for truth, *has two entirely different and contradictory effects*. And this is important to understand.

*It is quite noticeable . . .*

. . . that using the two-step . . .

*It is quite noticeable that this approach has brought you closer to the Holy Spirit's sorting out of truth and falsity. The true becomes what can be used to meet the goal. The false becomes the useless from this point of view.*

The idea, “nobody wears shoes here” for the one with no connection to the Father’s Perspective experienced *the false* and it was *useless*. But the other Son of God, doing the two-step, saw the same truth and it became useful.

*The true becomes what can be used to meet the goal. The false becomes the useless from this point of view. The situation now has meaning, but only because the GOAL has made it meaningful.*

*The goal of truth has further practical advantages. If the situation . . .*

. . . whatever the situation might be . . .

*. . . is used for truth and sanity, its outcome MUST be peace.*

Now how do you use a situation for truth and sanity? By *abandoning* your best thinking, your best judgments, and becoming still and enquiring beyond your best judgments and thinking, “what is the truth here?” knowing that you are asking of the Holy Spirit—which is nothing more than your Right mind—or the Father, which is That which has expressed in you your Birthright as His Son or Daughter. You see?

*If the situation is used for truth and sanity, its outcome MUST be peace. And this is quite apart from what the outcome IS.*

In other words, peace will be the fundamental outcome. And it will lay the groundwork for the manifest outcome for the evidence of the Father's Will being experienced. You see?

*If peace is the condition of truth and sanity, and cannot be WITHOUT them, where peace is THEY must be.*

*THEY*, being truth and sanity, and peace is the condition of them.

So truly, when you are engaging in the two-step, when you are engaging in the practice of the holy instant, you are engaging in an intent to be at peace. It's that simple. And the times when you will be called upon most stringently to engage in the two-step so that you might experience your peace, are when it seems as though peace is an impossible experience to have . . . because there is an *emergency!* There is something that requires your attention! There is something which requires your personal control! There is something which requires you to do something "out there" physical—actual!

But what you're all having to condition yourself to understand is, that that demand which seems to call for an outward act of taking charge, is actually a demand to shut up—to choose for your peace . . . to abandon your independent, frightened, concerned stance and sense of self, to immediately shift your attention to the Father to enquire as to His Perspective or to the Holy Spirit—that which is nothing but your right Mind—to hear what the truth is, what the Father's Perspective is, so that you might act from there, act from the experience of it that is revealed to you. You're to do this as immediately as the situation seems to demand you to act. But the action is one of turning to the Father [snaps fingers] quickly, without wasting your time arguing, without wasting your time being upset by the demand . . . all of these are things that delay the experience of fulfillment.

You do it instantly by neglecting to do what doesn't work, which is thinking, reasoning, valuing the opportunity to become somebody in your own right. See, it's neglecting to do that, [snaps fingers] quickly neglecting to do that.

Neglecting, that's effortless. [snaps fingers] Quickly doing what is effortless, and saying, "Father what is the truth here?" You see?

In that way, the situation which is calling for correction is being used for the purpose of establishing the goal at the outset. Not after the emergency is past, where then you find a way to show that somehow God was teaching you a grand lesson . . . you see? . . . which you didn't know at the time but you know, you've been able to make some sense out of it.

No . . . no. That will not give you the correct answer. That will not give you a relevant answer. It will, perhaps, make you feel a little bit more comfortable in your ignorance. But it's an ignorance you shouldn't have to be made comfortable in and the way not to be in that position is to learn to quickly [snaps fingers] instantly say, in the face of the situation: "Father, what is the truth here? Father, what is the purpose here? Father what do I need to know?"

Because in that way you will know what to do and you will see how the situation can become the means for the correction. An important thing to grasp.

*If you experience peace, it is because the truth has come to you, and you will see the outcome truly, for deception cannot prevail against you. And you will recognize the outcome BECAUSE you are at peace. Here again, you see the opposite of the ego's way of looking, for the ego believes the SITUATION brings the experience.*

And of course, the experience that the situation brings isn't something you can understand until afterwards, after it has steamrollered you, after it has chewed you up and spit you out and left you in a position where you really have to look hard to find out where the blessing was in it. And then you do it instead of saying, "Absolutely not! This is not the correct answer and I'm not to find benefit or blessing in it. I'm not to find blessing in not practicing the holy instant. If I want the blessing, I must practice it. If I practice it, I will find the peace even though the emergency seems to say, "You can't have your peace until the situation has run its course." Bullshit! And you must be willing to say *that* or any equivalent disclaimer of the suggestion.

*The Holy Spirit knows that the situation is as the goal determines it, and is experienced ACCORDING to the goal.*

So once again, the focus here . . . the only answer here is, that the moment a demand presents itself to you, the moment a situation presents itself to you that leaves you at a loss, you must, [snaps fingers] right then . . . hesitate. Don't engage in your knee jerk mental response. And you say, even though you don't think you have time to ask for answers, you say, "Father, what is the truth here?" You refuse to *re-act*. You insist on silencing the reaction. And you say with commitment, "Father, what is the truth here? Father what is the answer that *heals* here? What is the answer that blesses, not curses the apparent cause of the situation—that causes me to be at a loss?" You see?

It really is simple. It's so simple that I can't put it in a lot of different words over and over. And so I know it is beginning to seem monotonous: You've got to do the two-step . . . you've got to do the two-step . . . or I could say you've got to practice the holy instant. So we have two ways to say it, but I've got to say it over and over because that is the simple answer.

Stop and think about it for a moment. Look back over your lifetime. You have had situations haven't you? You have had lots of situations. Some of them dire emergencies at the time, some of them just mild emergencies, but always things that caused you fear and brought you to a point where you felt obligated to act, to get control and to resolve the situation all by your puny little self . . . right?

Oh yes, it motivated you to ask God, it motivated you to prayer . . . to pray. But here's the thing I want to ask you: Are you still here to listen to me talk to you tonight? Did those dire emergencies . . . did those situations kill you off? No! That should tell you right there that you can afford to take five minutes in the face of a situation to stop and say, "Father, what is the truth here?" You could even take a day to stop the reaction and not respond . . . and get into your peace.

After all, some of the emergencies you've had, happened twenty years ago and you still haven't sat down and said, "Father, what's the truth here about that situation? That situation where I seemed to have a burst appendix and it had to be removed." Is your appendix back yet? Have you had the healing of that situation yet? You might as well do it now. You could have done it then . . . you didn't know, but you could have done it then. You can do it now. Do you see what I'm saying?

You can engage in the holy instant about a situation that happened twenty years ago, you can engage in the holy instant relative to it now twenty years later. You see?

So *you can* in the face of an emergency today neglect to react, neglect to throw your world up-side-down and your mind into chaos. And *you can* choose to shut up. And in the silence in you ask the Father to know the truth. Ask the Father, "What do I want to come of this, as Your Son or Daughter, the recipient of my Birthright that You have given me, what do I want to become of this? What is it for?" And then listen innocently without providing background fill of all the things that you can come up with.

Leave your mind in pristine quietness and continue to listen and you will feel the peace come and then you will feel truth and sanity which are inseparable from your peace. And you will hear the answer. And then you will know what needs to be done and the means that the situation provides will clearly be the supportive environment in which the correction can occur. It's the truth.

*If you experience peace, it is because the truth has come to you, and you will see the outcome truly, for deception cannot prevail against you.*

If you choose to listen to the voice for fear and remain independent, then deception will prevail against you and you have no choice about it. And at the moment, deception is prevailing in your lives every time you choose to think that you are an independent entity, capable of becoming successful by employing means and manipulations that take advantage of your Brother in the process of exalting you.

*[And] you will recognize the outcome BECAUSE you are at peace. Here again, you see the opposite of the ego's way of looking, for the ego believes the SITUATION brings the experience. The Holy Spirit knows that the situation is as the goal determines it, and is experienced ACCORDING to the goal.*

Now:

*The goal of truth requires faith.*

The reason you snatch up whatever bits of control you think you have available to you to get hold of the situation to make yourself safe is because you're not used to practicing faith. You're not used to making an investment of *you* in wanting to know what the truth is and listening for it outside of your best judgments, and then daring to make commitment to it and base your actions upon it. You're not used to that. That's faith.

*The goal of truth requires faith. Faith is implicit in the acceptance of the Holy Spirit's purpose, and this faith is all-inclusive. Where the goal of truth is set, there faith MUST be.*

So what is your goal in the face of a situation? Your goal is to find out what the truth is . . . what the God's honest truth is. What God's honest truth is.

*The Holy Spirit sees the situation as a WHOLE. The goal establishes the fact that everyone involved in it will play his part in its accomplishment.*

You see? When you're all by yourself, when you're doing things independently, you see everybody else as independent too. You see everyone else behaving in a self-centered, arrogant, mean-spirited, self-protective way to the disadvantage of everyone else, just as you are. That doesn't allow you to feel much trust. That doesn't allow you to feel any reason to have faith.

But when you listen and when you hear and the goal of truth is revealed to you and you find your peace and truth and sanity reside in your awareness, then you will see that everyone involved will play his part in its accomplishment . . . will play his part in the fruition of the Father's Will or Intent . . . and you will sell a lot of shoes, in so many words.

*This is inevitable. No-one will fail in anything. This seems to ask for faith beyond you, and beyond what you can give.*

Isn't that marvelous? You see, the first salesman says, "Have to have faith *beyond you*. Oh-h, I can't have faith beyond me," because he doesn't know who he is. And the other salesman who knows he's a Son of God and hears, "Oh, you need to have faith *beyond you*," he says, "Oh, I know. That's wonderful. Of course, yes, I'm with that. I'm yielding to that all the time." You see? So the same truth is experienced both for and against the one embracing it depending upon the vantage point from which that one is looking at the situation.

*This seems to ask for faith beyond you, and beyond what you can give.*

In effect you can read that and hear that as a promise of a capacity that you don't think you have so that you can say, "Wow, well I'm going to believe what Raj is saying. It's asking for faith beyond me and beyond what I can give. That must mean I've got the capacity. So I'm going to eagerly pay attention to receiving the awareness of that capacity so that I might feel it and be at one with it and bring no opposition into my experience of it. You see? That's the good news and that's the good response.

*Yet this is so only from the viewpoint of the ego, . . .*

. . . meaning that it's beyond you and beyond what you can give . . .

*. . . this is so only from the viewpoint of the ego,  
for the ego believes in "solving" conflict . . .*

. . . you know, bringing your innate independent capacities to improve yourself and think clearly and logically and come up with answers that bless you and bless others. You see?



... the ego believes in "solving" conflict through fragmentation, . .

... not through joining, through being and continuing to be independent, separate, separate and apart from all the others who are being separate and apart from you and everyone else. You see?

... and does NOT perceive the situation as a whole.

If you are choosing for your peace and you're willing to abide in it and invite of the Holy Spirit the awareness of the truth and the experience of what the Son or Daughter of God *feels* in the experience of truth, then that holy Son or Daughter of God does not look out as an independent agent and does not see others as independent agents . . . but sees everyone, including himself, in the context of wholeness, in the context of the Father's Intent in the expression of Creation in which all of the Sons and Daughters of God have available to them the concrete experience of Reality where no threat, no separation, no vulnerability exists. It sees it all in its infinity as a unified whole.

Therefore, . .

... the ego, which does not perceive the situation as a whole . . .

... seeks to split off segments of the situation and deal with them SEPARATELY, for it has faith in separation, and not in wholeness.

Important . . . especially if there are a number of different elements, each capable of acting and causing things to happen separate from the other . . . you have the "House of Representatives" or "The Senate" or any other government on the globe which has factions which can be manipulated to overthrow the other things that need to be handled because everyone is being orchestrated in a different form of attack or coercion, not knowing of how many tendrils of control are being exercised. You see?

... the ego believes in "solving" conflict through fragmentation, and does NOT perceive the situation as a whole. Therefore, seeks to split off segments of the situation and deal with them SEPARATELY, for it has faith in separation, and not in wholeness.

And individuals just like you do exactly the same thing. And you get parts of families to work against the other parts of families or to try to coerce them into a positive direction, but it's still all manipulation that does not by its very means of solving the problem, communicate unity and the value of the wholeness of family that is primal, that is fundamental. You see?

We're reading a section called *Practical Forgiveness*. And what must be understood is that inseparable from practical forgiveness is the realization that correction of a situation can only occur in a context of, I'm going to say, unlimited unity, but let's also say, the unity of factions which you have employed and found valuable assets in getting what you want.

And so this is something you've got to consciously be willing to let go of. When you are engaging in the holy instant and when you want to know the truth, understand that the truth you will hear will not be something you can use to coerce people with or to control them with.

You know what it is?

It's the dawning in your heart of the presence of Love that embraces and unifies because there's no place in it . . . there's no place in the presence of Love for independence, for factions, for fragmentation to be or to seem to be valuable or to seem to be useful.

And that's tonight's message. That sums it up completely. And so we're going to stop here and let it rest.

And I look forward to being with you next time. I love you all.

*A Course In Miracles (reference pages)*  
Chapter 17 – Section: PRACTICAL FORGIVENESS  
<sup>1</sup> Sparkly Book – p. 416, 2<sup>nd</sup> Full Par./JCIM – p.174, Par. 6/CIMS – p. 350, Par. 59  
Chapter 17 – Section: SETTING THE GOAL  
First Edition – p. 341, 2<sup>nd</sup> Full Par./Second Edition – p.366, Par. 3

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