

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

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

A new section:

THE NEED FOR FAITH¹

Faith is a word that has been discussed a lot over the eons. Everyone has a fairly good idea, they think, of what the word means. But we're talking about a very specific definition of faith, a very specific meaning of faith.

You know the phrase, "Being painted into a corner?" In a way, the *Course* or any truly spiritual system if it is truly valuable, paints its followers into a corner—moves everyone into a place where there are no alternatives, nothing is wishy-washy. You're faced with one choice.

To those who like options, it seems unfair, unreasonable—justification for abandoning the spiritual system, whatever it might have been. Oh, no, it's nice to have the time to study the various options, and delay the reason for having been painted into the corner . . . delay Awakening.

Now, faith and faithlessness are inseparable from the act and state of joining with your Father—reuniting with your Father, taking a stand of union in which you acknowledge and accept the fact fully that you are the holy Son or Daughter of God and not the piss-ant mortal you've claimed you were, you thought you were, you were taught you were and which you've been committed to for indefinite periods of time.

Faith and faithlessness are inseparable from the two-step: The practice of the holy instant and the act of divorce that everyone has engaged in—divorce from your Father. It's that simple. It's that black and white.

And so, when we're talking about the need for faith here, we're very specifically talking about the need for abandoning independence. You might not have thought of that. It's the act of repairing a rift that you tried to imagine you made when you couldn't. It's the re-uniting of what never could have been separated. You might not have thought of it that way either.

Faith is where you undo what put you in the realm of faithlessness.

Faith is the way you replace the valuing of the idea of emancipation from That which you have to cooperate with, That which you are a part of, That which you must fit in with. You see?

Faith is the way you undo the act of independence—of claiming independence and behaving as though you have succeeded.

Faithlessness is the state you find yourself in when you have denied that which justifies faith . . . when you have denied that which justifies the, I'm going to say, dullness of being whole in place of the excitement of being part, the excitement of being ungrounded, the excitement of being disconnected from stability.

Faithlessness is the state of being called, "orphanhood." Faithlessness is the state of being unconscious of what's Real, unconscious of truth and enjoying the challenging task of bringing truth about—of creating reality that is comfortable and safe, while insisting upon staying in the vulnerable unsafe position of being disconnected from your Source.

Joined equals faith. Divorced—un-joined—equals faithlessness.

In the un-joined place the only thing you can have faith in is yourself. And you do stay in that place because you find that stimulating and satisfying. But nevertheless, all the time that you're living your life un-joined with your Source and unconscious of who you Are, as that which can be joined with a Source that makes you Real, you are in a constant state of faithlessness.

Important to understand. Important to contemplate what I'm saying because it might not be easy to fully grasp it and let yourself into it. But if this is not understood, then we will continue to need a section in this book called, *THE NEED FOR FAITH*.

It's time to move beyond the need for faith. It's time to move beyond the need to practice the two-step. It's time to move beyond the need to engage in the holy

instant. The holy instant is a transitionary point—that place where, once you have moved over it, you know who you Are. There is no doubt. Faith is not called for. Because you understand from the tips of the toes of your Being who you Are and what everything Is, and you know you've come Home into your right Mind.

Now, we talked last time about the fact that the correction of a problem is not the result of manipulating things but is a matter of coming back into that point in your mind where you said, "Father I'd rather do it myself." "Father, I'd rather see it my way." "Father, I'd rather say what things mean." And at that point creating an illusion—a delusion—which you were willing to shift your attention and commitment and belief to.

Therefore, the correction of a problem is never with the results of that decision. The correction of a problem is always coming back to that place where you said, "Father I would rather do it myself." "Father, I would rather give the definitions to everything" and in that spot *abandon* your commitment to your best judgments because the *abandonment of your Father* was what caused the problem, not all of the *results* of the abandonment.

That's what makes it simple. Either you are joined or you are un-joined. Either you are practicing faith or you're practicing faithlessness. It doesn't matter what the faith is in. It doesn't matter what the faithlessness is in. It matters whether you're practicing faithlessness or faith. It matters whether you're insisting on living in the middle of the Kingdom of Heaven, as though it's a material world and universe, as a *thing*—an *object* that came into existence by happenstance.

From there, your experience of your divine being and of the Kingdom of Heaven will be experienced as exactly the opposite. And as you know, you tend to try to fix up the distresses and the conflicts in the result—in this material world and universe—when what's called for . . . again, and this is part of being clear about faith and faithlessness . . . you must come back to the place in you where you made that choice for faithlessness, for *independent authority and all the excitement and all of the power and all of the prestige that you think will come from it* and you abandon faithlessness. You abandon the conscious intent to insist on being an independent agent. That's what abandoning faithlessness *means*. And if that's clear to you, you will move forward in your Awakening much faster.

Why? Because you won't spend your time trying to fix things up and move objects around into the place where they are not threatening. You will go to that place where you made the mistake in your *mind*. And you will abandon the attitude and the act of faithlessness. And you will exchange it for faith. Faith, which is you shutting up—you in the silence reaching beyond your faithlessness, reaching beyond all of your best thinking, reaching into Something that doesn't seem as though it's truly there, which requires faith on your part, and you say, "Father, Holy Spirit . . ." or you know, "That which knows the truth, *please* share with me what the truth is. I

will be quiet and I will listen without the interference of my faithlessness (meaning my own best thinking) and I will lean into with faith, with willingness, That which created me, That which loves me, That which holds nothing back of what It is from me—His expression—and I will stay in this state of quiet inquisitiveness and willingness to hear until I hear, until I learn the truth.” That’s faith.

But more than that, when you are willing to stay in that place and not take over again—not take charge again—and the truth is revealed to you, it changes entirely the way you experience what you had been calling the material world and universe and mortals. It will change the way you’re seeing everything.

And where you had been seeing problems will not be problems because you will know the truth. And your utter peace in the presence of what had been called a material world and universe, which you’re able to be peaceful in because it’s clear to you it’s the Kingdom of Heaven, constitutes the replacement of faith, constitutes that which means you will never be called upon to practice faith again, because faithlessness is simply gone without any hard learning lessons. It’s gone! A gentle shift of perception that changes everything causes what had been misunderstood before to vanish, leaving you nothing to work your way through or spiritualize your mind about.

One could say that healing will have occurred. Those who are the beneficiary of the clarity that has come to you by virtue of your practicing faith rather than faithlessness, will say a miracle has happened—that which they weren’t expecting will occur and it will cause their curiosity to blossom, to emerge, accompanied by a confidence and a positive expectation that they can’t really justify, but everything that’s catching their attention manifesting healing will bring that confidence into play where they would ordinarily have been frightened.

Now, let’s go into the book.

There is no problem in any situation that faith will not solve.

Oh, I’m sure, aside from what I’ve just shared, that every one of you can look at your relationships or your life and see that there are situations that faith will not solve, situations that no matter how much positive thinking you use and how consistently you expect the best of your lover or your neighbor or your friend, it’s not going to make any difference. Faith in your fellowman won’t do anything. That’s the fear. That’s the confidence.

But the way you’re using the word, “faith” causes you to feel that way. It justifies it. Because you’re saying, “No matter how much faith *I have*, no matter how much faith I generate from this orphan that I think I am, it’s going to be impossible to change anything.” And you’re right. Because we’re not talking about faith that you muster

up within yourself and bring forth and bless your world with and coerce your Brothers and Sisters with. That's not the faith that will solve any problem.

There is no problem in any situation that . . .

. . . your engaging in the holy instant . . .

. . . will not solve.

That your engaging in the abandonment of your independence and saying, "Father, what is the truth here? Holy Spirit, give me the experience of the Kingdom of Heaven and my holy Brother as they Are—as they truly Are." And then *refrain* from acting, *refrain* from taking steps that don't arise out of an influx of inspiration of truth that comes to you as a result of your *asking and refraining from acting* until you get the answer.

There is no problem in any situation that . . .

. . . *that* kind of . . .

. . . faith will not solve.

You see?

There is no shift in any aspect of the problem but will make solution impossible.

There is no shift, there is no manipulation of individuals that you can make from your faithlessness—from your place of independence, from your personal authority.

There is no shift in any aspect of the problem . . .

. . . in any manipulations you engage in . . .

. . . but will make solution impossible.

Why? Because you're doing it from a place of powerlessness. You're doing it from a place of *faith-less-ness*. You're doing it from a place where you're *unplugged* from your Source, the power of which moving through you, heals—does solve problems. You see?

For if you shift part of the problem elsewhere, . . .

. . . meaning where? Meaning elsewhere from the place where you made the mistake, the place where you made the choice between the teachers you were going to listen to. If you shift part of the problem elsewhere—from that key point—and you

shift it to the way things look and the way your Brothers and Sisters look, through your independent perspective, the solution will always be impossible. Because it will keep you bound. And it will keep you bound because you're looking at the wrong place. You're looking at the place where the problem can't be solved because it's not the place where the problem was created, which was in your decision as to which of the two teachers you were going to listen to. And you made the wrong choice.

For if you shift part of the problem elsewhere, the meaning of the problem MUST be lost, . .

. . . not only that, . .

. . . the meaning of the problem MUST be lost, and the solution to the problem is inherent in its meaning.

What is the meaning of the problem? It's not what the bastard over there did to the bitch over there, who then came down on you and ruined your life. No. The meaning of the problem is: "Before I saw the bitch and the bastard, I made a choice as to what *lens* I was going to look at them through, what teacher and what teaching I was going to employ in perceiving them." You see?

The meaning of the problem lies in that choice. And if you don't recognize that the meaning of the problem is there, you will try to protect yourself against the bitch and the bastard instead of forgiving the world you're seeing by choosing not to look at it all by yourself any longer. In other words, engaging in faith. Is this beginning to make simple clear sense?

Is it not possible that all your problems HAVE been solved, but you have removed yourself from the solution?

You see? Is it not possible that everything right now is the Kingdom of Heaven, and everyone are the Sons and Daughters of God, and every part of Creation beautifully illuminates all that is true about God? Is it not possible that because everything already is the Kingdom of Heaven and it never changed, *all your problems have been solved*? You see? They've been solved because they never became what you began to see them as when you chose to look at them through your faithlessness, which means your isolation and barren disconnection from your Source—from That which gives your Being Meaning.

Is it not possible that all your problems HAVE been solved, . .

. . . because they're not Real? . .

. . . but you have removed yourself from the solution?

You removed yourself from the act of faith, you removed yourself from the connection with That which validates and illuminates the divine meaning of everything that It Created. You removed yourself . . . “But Father, I’d rather do it myself! But Father, I’d rather do it my way! But Father, I’d rather define what everything is and by damn it I’m going to!”

Is it not possible that all your problems HAVE been solved, but you have removed yourself from the solution? Yet faith must be where something has been done, and where you SEE it done.

[Repeats] . . . faith must be where something has been done, . .

. . . faith must be where the something that you did that separated you from your Father has been done and where you see it done. You will see it done when you reverse the choice—the choice you made for the teacher that teaches illusion. You see?

A situation is a relationship, . .

. . . there we come back to that . . . *involvement* that you can’t get away from. All of the Brotherhood that constitutes the wholeness of what God is Being, all of the Brotherhood that fits together, all of the Brotherhood that finds no need to gain control over anything else, no need to manipulate, no need to exercise power for self-satisfaction, self-aggrandizement and making oneself important.

A situation is a relationship, being the joining of thoughts. If problems are perceived, . .

. . . you know . . . the bitch and the bastard.

If problems are perceived, it is because the thoughts are judged to be in conflict. But if the goal is truth, this is impossible. Some idea of bodies must have entered, for minds cannot attack.

“Oh-h, yeah right! My attention became involved with bodies. All I can think about are bodies. All I see all day long are bodies. You know . . . of course, yes . . . my problem is because I’m seeing bodies.” Nobody thinks like that. And as a result it’s hard to understand what it means to say:

Some idea of bodies must have entered, . .

No. The way it works is: That you look at God’s Creations—and I’m speaking specifically here about sentient Beings—and you look at your Brothers and Sisters and you don’t . . . you know, generally think of them as bodies. But you do think of them as minds—minds that have been conditioned by their life . . . conditioned by their parents, conditioned by their neighborhoods, conditioned by their teachers.

And you see them as response mechanisms, who have been conditioned to behave in particular ways. And the behavior is engaged in by bodies. So you don't think of everyone as bodies but you think of them as minds that are conditioned to behave in a particular way that is predictable and dependable and allow you to come to stable ongoing conclusions about them—allowing you to behave in a way that consistently keeps a certain amount of equilibrium present in a relationship.

So where does such an assessment arise from? Where does such an assessment about your fellowman come from? Well, if you joined with the Father, such assessments would not even occur to you. They would be nonexistent and completely unavailable.

These assessments of your Brothers and Sisters arise from the un-joined place, they arise from the state of mind you find yourself in when you have abandoned your Source and have been immediately faced with fear and guilt. Suddenly your invulnerable existence has been replaced with vulnerability and justification for fear and justification for defense against what? Minds conditioned through fear and guilt to behave in erratic and undependable ways that require defense to be brought into play. And you don't think of them as bodies. But indeed, "Joe over there, who isn't particularly handsome and isn't particularly intelligent is bound to behave in ways that I should be on guard against." You see . . . you see?

And so in that way the thought of bodies has come into the picture.

Some idea of bodies must have entered, for minds cannot attack.

Now the interesting thing is, that when you engage in the holy instant and the peace of God floods you and brings you into a state of peace, it's impossible for you . . . it's not only impossible for you to see your neighbor as threatening, *it doesn't occur to you to use your mind in a way that would see that.*

There's no sense of bodies. There's not even any sense of conditioned minds and conditioned nervous systems. You see?

The thought of bodies is the sign of faithlessness, . .

. . . got it?

The thought of bodies is the sign of . . .

. . . having said: "Father, I'd rather see it my way. Father, I want a divorce. Father, I am emancipating myself from You and moving into a substantial state of independence, which I'm going to be in charge of."

The thought of bodies is the sign . . .

. . . that you got a divorce from your Father. And that's called faithlessness.

The thought of bodies . . .

. . . and the key word there is “thought” not “bodies.”

The thought of bodies is the sign of faithlessness, for bodies cannot solve anything.

But once you've made your assessment of this conditioned mind and a nervous system that follows that mind—meaning a body that's going to behave according to that mind—that's not going to solve anything. And yet, the fact is that all of you—most all of you, for a good part of your day—go through the day manipulating your Brothers because that is the way you see them and that is the way you think you must protect yourself. And in doing that, you have managed to stay away from the place where the wrong choice of teachers occurred, and therefore, you're not in the place where it's obvious that there's only one thing to do and that **is, turn** to the other Teacher.

The thought of bodies is the sign of faithlessness, for bodies cannot solve anything. And it is their intrusion on the relationship, . .

. . . what . . . their intrusion? Don't get hung up on the word “bodies.”

The thought of bodies is the sign of faithlessness, . .

And it is their intrusion . . .

. . . the *thoughts* of bodies . . .

. . . it is their intrusion on the relationship, an error in your thoughts ABOUT the situation, which then becomes the justification for your lack of faith.

It's the justification for staying firmly in the orphan mindset, in the place where self-protection must be engaged in and you remain lost. You're not at the place where healing can occur.

Now:

You WILL make this error, . .

. . . and you're all making the error everyday right now.

You WILL make this error, but be not at all concerned with that.

[chuckling] After all, the only one who would be concerned about it is the orphan engaged in being independent and being frightened by the experience which causes him to bring into play further self-protection rather than remembering [snaps fingers] “Ah, I need to go back to the place where I made the wrong choice and not engage in correcting the details of what I’m experiencing as a result of that wrong choice.”

You WILL make this error, but be not at all concerned with that. The error does not matter. Faithlessness brought to faith . . .

. . . interesting what that now means. Faithlessness . . . the independent stance brought to a place in one’s attitude where one is willing to reach beyond self-governance and reach out to and join with Something beyond it, that’s:

Faithlessness brought to faith . . .

. . . see? . . .

. . . will never interfere with truth. But faithlessness used AGAINST truth will always destroy faith.

In other words, in your independent orphan mode, *acting purposely* to avoid the experience of truth which would come from joining, refusing to join because there is an insistence upon ongoing independence . . . that will always destroy faith. Not confidence you have in the good that another can do, it will destroy the faith that is the act of joining, the act of undoing the mistake of choosing for the wrong teacher.

If you lack faith, ask that it be restored where it was LOST, . .

. . . and that is why what we’re talking about tonight is so important. And it’s why any spiritual system of thought or teaching must bring everyone to this place where you’re painted into the corner and there are no choices anymore except which teacher are you going to choose and giving you the opportunity to make the right choice this time and be done with illusion. Be done with misunderstanding. Be done with insanity.

If you lack faith, ask that it be restored where it was LOST, . .

. . . which is again, monotonously . . . the place where you made the choice for the wrong teacher within you . . .

. . . and seek not to have it made up to you elsewhere, as if you had been unjustly deprived of it.

You won’t have the experience of having been unjustly deprived of it when you have been in-filled with the understanding of truth. And it simply won’t be any part of

your experience—your mental makeup—to see a call for justice, because you will see that nothing that you ever thought you were suffering from was Real. It was only the effect of having made a wrong choice, having experienced conflict as a result, and then not addressing the difficulty where the correction could occur, which was in the choice for teachers.

Only what YOU have not given can be lacking in ANY situation.

Once again, we're at this "painted into the corner" simplicity. The only thing under any circumstance that can be lacking in any situation which is something that you have not given, was the right choice—the choice for the right Teacher.

Only what YOU have not given can be lacking in ANY situation.

"Oh-h, you didn't give enough love to him. Oh-h, you didn't have enough patience with her. That's what was lacking. If you had given that, there wouldn't be a problem." No!

Only what YOU have not given can be lacking in ANY situation.

And the only thing that you can withhold in any way, shape or form, is one thing: Your willingness to acknowledge your Source. Your willingness to acknowledge your Father/Mother, That which gives you definition, That which amounts to a Birthright that you're not responsible for, that can't be taken away. And even though you can cover It up and become unconscious of It, you cannot alter It and It will forever remain in you, to stumble over and have the surprise of discovering . . . or which you can consciously choose for and have the pleasure of being transformed by.

The choice for the holy instant is the choice for faith. The choice for independence is the choice for faithlessness.

Simple. Profound. Embracing It and allowing for It to be true is the way you Wake up.

Which teacher are you going to insist upon listening to?

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

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All rights reserved
PO Box 1490 / Kingston, WA 98346-1490 / USA
Phone: 360-638-0530 Fax: 360-881-0071
Website: <http://www.nwffacim.org>
E-Mail: paul@nwffacim.org