

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

April 30th 2017

—oOo—

THIS IS A ROUGH TRANSCRIPT.
THIS COPY IS NOT IN ITS FINAL FORM
AND WILL BE UPDATED

Okay, good evening. Before we begin, let's take a few moments to be quiet together.

[Quiet time]

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

Interesting times. Interesting experiences. Experiences not everyone is prepared for. Experiences which cause concern on a much larger and a more continuous scale than everyone is used to. And it's easy to become overwhelmed.

So, tonight we're going to talk about a very simple point: one so simple it seems unreasonable and one so simple that it gets overlooked.

Now, in the news today, at least on the internet, someone in an editorial setting made the comment that it will take years to undo damage from Trump's first hundred days. That idea could just as easily have been expressed in the words, "It's going to take years for so-and-so or for *me* to undo the damage from the stroke that I experienced, or so-and-so experienced." Or, "It will take years to undo the damage from the loss of my father or my daughter or even from my beloved pet." "It's going to take years to [chuckling] undo the damage from being a mortal"—any number of things that make a statement that each one tends to believe, which says, "My Wholeness is not available to me." "My Wholeness was taken away from me, and it will take a long time to recover it. I expect to recover it, but it will take time." And *that*, although it is hopeful, is certainly more depressing than an option that would be quicker.

The fact is that each one of you has had what you would call an "aha!" experience. Each one of you has had the experience of discovering that you were suffering from a belief that wasn't true, and laboring under it unnecessarily.

A simple example is that, early on in Paul's experience, he worked for Sears in the credit department. And one of the events that happens in a credit department is that customers of Sears would apply for credit at other companies, and those companies who were given Sears as a reference, would call to get a rating of that person's account. Paul thought that he was going to be called upon to rate it himself. And he was very concerned that he would not rate correctly and cause the person getting the rating to be hurt by it.

It took a while for it to register with him that, when the call came, there [were] basically two or three things needed: "How long had the account been opened at Sears?" "How many payments had been

late?” That didn’t require an opinion at all; it was all there in black and white on the account. And when Paul realized that it was that simple, he was immediately relieved by an “aha” experience. He wasn’t *called upon* to do anything that would hurt the customer. He wasn’t called upon to do anything where he might make a mistake or a false assessment. Nothing was required of him personally.

Every single one of you has had the experience of learning something that cancelled out a belief that had been negatively governing you. Now, that didn’t take a hundred years to correct. It happened in an instant. And that is the point.

The sense of time, the sense of how long it will take to recover from something perceived to be damaging, *this is something no one needs to labor under any longer!* And we’re going to take a look at why. And what we’re going to take a look at is nothing new. We’re just going to say it a little bit differently tonight.

Now, I’ve said before that the only thing you are confronted with is Reality, or the only thing you are confronted with is the Kingdom of Heaven. Everyone hopes to Wake up *some day* and experience the Kingdom of Heaven *some day*. But the point is that *in this very moment* you are in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven is the only thing confronting you; therefore, it is in this very moment, in this very instant, that you stand on the threshold of an “aha” experience.

Now the simple fact is that you don’t need to learn anything, you don’t have to become more educated, spiritually or otherwise. Nothing is required of you except one simple thing: to shut up, to become still. It means being willing to set the problem or the distress on the back burner no matter how negative or dire it seems, no matter how much you’ve been frightened by it. You need to table it for a moment . . . or for five minutes. You need to become still and enter into the holy instant.

Like I said, we’re not talking about anything new . . . *the holy instant*, the instant of holiness, the instant of Wholeness, which could also be called “the Wholeness of Now”. . . *the Wholeness of Now*.

I’ve also used the image of a funnel and have described the process of meditating—in other words, of shutting up—as, if you will imagine, a ball circling around at the top of the funnel, much like the ball in a roulette wheel. And you know that when the ball is spun, it goes round and round and round as long as it has momentum, and it doesn’t begin to descend.

Well, here’s the thing: Will, the use of will, the use of self-assertion, is the energy that moves the ball around in the funnel. The more energy, the more willful one is, the higher in the funnel the ball goes. But as willfulness diminishes, the ball begins to descend.

I’ve also pointed out before that the only right use of will is to choose not to use it. And, indeed, that is what the practice of the holy instant accomplishes. And so, as you become still, as you shut up, as you stop energizing your emotions with fear, with anxiety, and with a need to be important, and a need to succeed in solving the problem . . . as you are willing to set that down, the ball begins to descend in the funnel, lower and lower and lower until, eventually, it arrives at the bottom of the funnel and what happens? . . . *it falls out of the funnel!* Free fall now. Free fall. Infinite presence. It isn’t even falling, because there isn’t a funnel to gauge whether it’s up or down. One finds oneself in *the Presence of Mind*, you might say, *as* the Presence of Mind.

Now, the point is that right now, in the here and now where you are, with whatever is going on in the room you’re in, or the automobile you’re riding in, no matter where you are now, you’re in the middle of the Kingdom of Heaven. You are not working toward getting well. You are not working toward Waking up. You are not working toward *dying* and going to the Kingdom of Heaven. You are right now, in this instant, filled with the capacity—with *the capacity*—to recognize God . . . well, let’s say,

in the blossoms of Spring, or in the flower on the table, or in the table that the vase is sitting on, or in the carpet, or in the colors. All of it is the Presence of God right here and right now—not off in the future—right here and right now for you to have an “aha” experience of, as a result of not assuming you know what anything means, so that you might in the innocence of stillness and the presence of curiosity and the expectation of seeing God have the “aha” experience of Wholeness *now*.

This is where the attention needs to be. Not out there in the future, not out there in an improved self, but in the one you are—the *Presence of Mind that you Are*—that has the capacity to become still, to disengage from the tension and intention—or willfulness—to control things, and just become the stillness of mind in which, what has been called, “the still small voice of God” can be heard.

You see, you can fall through the funnel right now while you’re sitting in that chair or while you’re washing the dishes or while you’re scratching your head. You see? The threshold is *here*. The Wholeness of *now* is available.

And let’s come back to our image of the funnel. As I said, through the use of will, through the use of self-assertion, through the attempt to be or become something, you cause your attention to circle higher and higher in the funnel, keeping you, therefore, trapped in the confines of the funnel. You think that you are supposed to manage to get your attention up, up, up, up, infinitely high in the funnel. But the fact is that, in abandoning the use of will, in the act of becoming willing—not willful—willing to become still, to abandon self-assertion, your attention begins to descend and ultimately fall out of the funnel where there is no up or down, there is not higher or lower, there is just Wholeness.

Now, the saying is that eternity is not endless time, but if you take one second of time—we’ll say the “now”—and snuff it out, snuff out that one moment of *time . . . that’s eternity*. The simple fact is that, when you abandon self-assertion, when you abandon thinking, when you abandon determining for yourself what everything is, *all by yourself*, when willfulness leaves, *eternity becomes your experience*. Deathless, unconflicted Being becomes yours.

Now mind you, this new experience of Being is going to happen while you’re sitting there in the chair or while you’re washing the dishes or whatever. It’s going to happen here. It’s going to happen now because now is where the threshold of consciousness is that you are “perched at,” if I may put it that way.

Now, the *Course* says that you must return Home, and the holy instant is the means of doing it. But it also says you can’t get there all the way by yourself . . . that God takes the last step.

Well, let’s look at the image of the funnel again. When you finally fall out of the bottom of the funnel, *that* is not an assertive action; that is an abandonment of assertion. And God takes the last step by making clear to you—as your conscious awareness—the Kingdom of Heaven as it is. Eternity as it is—not being endless time.

God takes the last step by revealing to you your Wholeness and the Wholeness of now. But I want you to be aware that all the time that you’ve been circling around in the funnel, the funnel has been an imaginative structure sitting in the middle of the infinite Presence of God, called Creation. And so, what God Is has been supporting you fully, in spite of the definitions you’ve created for yourself and that you maintain. And, in the maintenance of them, you keep yourself high up into the funnel.

And so, you fall out of the bottom of the funnel, and it’s like God catches you. But he catches you in the embrace that you have *always been held in* because this imagination of a funnel never took you out

of Creation Itself. God takes the last step by revealing to you *what has been since the beginning*—your Wholeness.

Each of you at every moment—no matter what drama or story is going on in the funnel—each one of you at every moment stands in this miraculous spot, this threshold of Awakening. Don't demean the spot, and don't demean the experience you're in the middle of: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, snow, flowers, leaves, green, red, your fellowman, your Brothers and Sisters. All of it is present in its pristine unaltered form, *right here, right now*. And it is these things which you are to look for God in, instead of looking to whatever technique or tool or power you might achieve and make your own so that you can be better in control and save yourself from all the bastards out there.

You have a better activity to engage in, one that *reduces* the practice of will, one that allows you to arrive at the point of the funnel and fall out to be caught by God and not lost, caught in the clear awareness of Reality, the clear awareness of whatever a blossom is, or a green leaf is, or a healthy leg or a healthy heart or the experience of a son or a father or mother or a daughter who you'd lost, or health that you think it would be difficult to regain. You stand—I'm going to use this word carefully—at the “magical” moment of an “aha,” and I mean magical in the sense of a wondrous unexpected experience of Truth.

Everyone needs to calm down and let themselves be present where they are and look at it, look at everything with innocent eyes, without bringing your preconceptions and confidences into play, because you want to see the more of what God is being right there than you have been seeing.

It isn't going to take years to undo anything. It's going to happen in the twinkling of an eye; it's going to happen in a moment. “Well, how long am I going to have to practice being present with everything when all of this crazy stuff is going on, and I need to be getting on to be taking care of *it*. You're asking, “How long am I going to have to engage in my Birthright of being in that frame of mind where revelation can occur and my right Mind can be returned to me. How long am I going to have to do that?” Well, the *Course* says, in so many words, “Infinite patience brings immediate results.” Why? Because impatience is willfulness and *blocks* the “aha”, *blocks* the miracle, *blocks* . . . what? . . . the sudden shift of perception. It's your Birthright to have sudden shifts of perception—miracles in which Truth replaces a belief that you were confident about and trusted in.

And so, even though it feels unfamiliar and unnatural, you practice the holy instant because that is *you behaving* consistently with your right Mind and, therefore, by being in better alignment with That which you've been denying, the denial breaks down and reassociation occurs . . . coming Home.

I do not spend *too much* time . . . I do not spend time *unnecessarily* talking about the holy instant. I talk about it because it is essential, because it is the key; it is the means of Waking up. I know, “the *Course* is very complicated.” “Oh, the *Course* is full of Principles that you can't possibly embrace all at the same time. It's going to take a hundred years to get it under your belt.” You're not supposed to get the Principles under your belt. You're not supposed to memorize what it's all about. You're supposed to let it all justify, if I may put it this way, justify you're practicing the holy instant, practicing the two-step. Maybe no one else is spending very much time talking about this, expounding on, illuminating it, but here it is from the *Course* itself.

THE TEACHERS MANUAL¹

There is another advantage,—and a very important one,—in referring decisions to the Holy Spirit with increasing frequency.

Well, to refer everything to the Holy Spirit with increasing frequency means to be withdrawing from the practice of will and self-assertion, which causes the ball to begin to naturally descend.

Perhaps you have not thought of this aspect, but its centrality is obvious. To follow the Holy Spirit's guidance is to let yourself be absolved of guilt.

Really, stop and think about it! Guilt stems from not being able to succeed, to get to the upper most point of the funnel through the stronger and stronger assertion of yourself and your will power. And you are guilty because you're not up there, and you are guilty because, by not being up there, everything is going to hell, and it must be because you're not doing well enough.

In the peaceful quietness of your Being that's the simple truth. And that becomes simply clear. It's easy to see. But to follow the Holy Spirit's guidance is to let yourself be absolved of guilt. Why? Because you're not trying to get to the top of the funnel anymore, and you're not energizing movement away from that threshold at the tip of the funnel where you fall out into infinite presence as the infinite presence of Mind that God is being as You. Continuing:

[This sentence was not read: It is the essence of the Atonement. It is the core of the curriculum.] The imagined usurping of functions not your own is the basis of fear.

Well, "The imagined usurping of functions not your own," what does that mean? It means that when you decided that you're going to determine what everything is, instead of letting the Father reveal it to you and not objecting to it, when you are determining the rules of life and the rules by which social living is to occur, instead of letting the Love that the Father is, that the Father is being in you as You, knows how to be and doesn't attempt to do anything other than be the embrace and the healing or Whole Presence that It is.

The imagined usurping of functions not your own is the basis of fear. The whole world you see . . .

. . . from that vantage point: I'm adding.

The whole world you see reflects the illusion you have done so, . .

. . . you look and you see what you have determined everything is, and everything reflects back to you the limits of what you are willing to see.

The whole world you see reflects the illusion you have done so, making fear inevitable.

So, the world you see that you've made up is making fear inevitable. But the way out of fear is to shift your attention to the Holy Spirit, referring decisions to the Holy Spirit. Continuing:

To return the function to the One to Whom it belongs is thus the escape from fear. And it is this that lets the memory of love return to you.

And I want to insert again that the place where this shift is going to occur is right there where you're sitting, right there in the room you're in, right there in the flowers or the table or the carpet or the Spring or Winter day outside. Right there is where the memory of Love will return to you, and, in the return, it will illuminate the *Loveliness* of God's Creating where that beautiful flower petal is or where that dust in the corner of the room is. Continuing:

Do not, then, think that following the Holy Spirit's guidance is necessary merely because of your own inadequacies.

No, this isn't about self-improvement. And it isn't because you're nothing or nobody. Do not, then, think that following the Holy Spirit's guidance is necessary because you're incompetent. No!

Do not, then, think that following the Holy Spirit's guidance is necessary merely because of your own inadequacies. It is the way out of hell for you.

Yielding to the Holy Spirit is you yielding to your right Mind—the Mind that is yours to experience and *will* be your experience when you fall out of the funnel, when you fall out of the place in which the rat-race goes on as an entirely false experience of being *right in the middle of Reality*, right in the middle of the Kingdom of Heaven.

This is the simple Truth. The part I want you to particularly remember tonight is to look at the petal on the flower or to look at your cat sleeping in the sun or to look at the sunlight in which the cat is sleeping and abandon whatever you think the meaning of them is and desire to have the Holy Spirit reveal to you *God* right there, right here, right now because it is all the Kingdom of Heaven, and it's not a hundred years off. The threshold, the magical, marvelous threshold of Awakening, of the “aha” experience is right here, right now in the Wholeness of Now.

Be with this. Don't think about it. Let the meaning of it be with you and move you.

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



[References]

¹ *The Teachers Manual—Section: As For The Rest . . .*
¹ *Sparkly Book – p.71, 3rd Par. / JCIM – No Manual for Teachers / CIMS – p.53, Par. 3*
First Edition – p. 67, Par. 3 / Second Edition – p 70, Par. 3

All of the activities of the Northwest Foundation for “A Course In Miracles” are provided without charge or obligation. This is possible because of thoughtfulness, love extended without conditions. Such is the nature of Gift. As a result these materials are available to you, because someone like you has already gifted you with them.

And, at Raj's instruction, these materials will never be sold.

If you would like to add your thoughtfulness and love, to gift others with the availability of these materials, you're invited to make a tax-deductible contribution at our website, or send it to our address, both of which are shown below.

A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj, April 30th 2017
© by *The Northwest Foundation for “A Course in Miracles” a non-profit corporation.*
All rights reserved
PO Box 1490 / Kingston, WA 98346-1490 / USA
Phone: 360-638-0530

Website: <http://www.nwffacim.org>
E-Mail: paul@nwffacim.org