

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

November 20th 2010

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

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

I have one thing I want to discuss tonight. And so, our Gathering will be brief.

Paul is afraid I'm going to sound "cutesy" because what I'm going to talk about tonight, I'm calling, "A Thanksgiving recipe." I'm not meaning to be cute or amusing. I'm going to be talking about a recipe for Thanksgiving. A recipe for thanks giving. And the reason I'm bringing it up is because there are simply too many people entering this next week—a week at least in the United States where Thanksgiving is a holiday being, we'll say, consciously celebrated . . . a day set aside for it.

And the likelihood is that a great many people will enter into this holiday not feeling any thanks at all, finding it very difficult to feel gratitude for anything. And yet, it is not anyone's birthright, it's no one's obligation to be entering into this week of holiday and thanks giving without joy, without gratitude.

And so, I'm going to suggest that you start Thanksgiving Day tonight or whenever you happen to be listening to these words, so that you consciously bring your attention to those things for which you are able to feel gratitude. I encourage you to do this so you don't haphazardly arrive at Thanksgiving Day and we'll say, at the last minute, find yourself bereft of joy, of gratitude, of thanks for anything.

Prepare to be grateful by being grateful ahead of time and finding the means to get past the justifications you have for being ungrateful, for being angry, for being hurt.

Now, we read last time that:

. . . God created love as He would have it be, and gave it as it IS.¹

In other words, pure. The gift of Love that finds expression in every act of God embodies Love. And because it embodies Love, it's function is to be Love. Every act of God is an act of Love. *You* are an act of God. Right at this moment, *you* are an act of God. You are Love and your function is Love. You can't change that. You can believe differently, but you can't change it. And because you can't change it, you can change your belief when you're believing the opposite.

In fact, you can do better than just have a better belief. You can abandon *believing*—believing things that you made up. And that is what the holy instant is for. That is what the two-step is for, for making a conscious choice to abandon what keeps you in bondage, what covers over any justification you might feel for being joyful and for experiencing what God is Being right where you are right now.

*Love has no meaning except as its Creator defined it by His Will.
It is impossible to define it otherwise and UNDERSTAND it.*

Well how could you define it otherwise?

Oh-h, . . . yes. Love is when someone treats you well. Love is when no one violates the mutual agreements that you have come to. Love is when no one violates a special relationship. But woe unto you and woe unto anyone else if a special relationship is violated or a mutual agreement is not lived up to.

I say, “woe unto you and whoa unto the one who doesn't live up to it” because if you are hooked into expressing judgment because someone hasn't respected you by violating a special relationship or breaking a mutual agreement or anything else, you have bound yourself to a call for justice—not a call for correction . . . a call for justice. A call for justice always brings into play the guilt of the one from whom justice is called for. You suffer from binding yourself to the task of extracting justice where disrespect has been expressed. And you eat yourself up by those actions.

“Oh, yes . . . my children don't respect me. Oh-h, yes . . . my partner doesn't respect me. Oh-h, yes . . . my children or my partner have . . . aww gee . . . decided to take advantage of me—not just disrespect me—but take advantage of me at my expense! This is unbelievable and intolerable. IT B-U-R-N-S M-Y A-S-S!”

And how many of you today are leading into a week of thanks giving with these feelings? And how many of you are unaware of the fact that in this inner business, you aren't noticing that gratitude is missing—the joy is missing? I mean, you know you're miserable, you *know* you're not happy, but it doesn't occur to you that something is absent that it's your Birthright to be experiencing and you are experiencing something that it is *not* your Birthright to be experiencing.

And so you're not questioning it. And you'll go through the week and you'll be miserable and you will ache inside and you will feel the injustice, and it might even end you up in bed, immobilized. And then you'll arrive at Thanksgiving Day. And because that's all anyone's talking about, as though they had nothing to worry about themselves, you know, they're so inconsiderate as to be happy when you're miserable, that day will come and you will be aware of how bereft you are of your joy.

And so I'm heading off that result at the beginning of the week. Why? Because I think the Thanksgiving holiday is so important? No. It does serve as a focus for answering the call for correction that's happening in you. And so I'm using it for that. But you know what? Whether it's today or next Thursday, you deserve to be relieved because it's your Birthright not to be caught in an illusion in something that you are suffering needlessly from.

Now, it says here:

Love is FREEDOM. To look for it by placing yourself in bondage is to SEPARATE yourself from it.

Well, what does that mean?

To look for it by placing yourself in bondage is to SEPARATE yourself from it.

Well, when you enter into a special relationship with someone, when you feel that they have an obligation to you, whether they're your children or whether they're your partners or whoever, you are confirming and substantiating a union . . . well, I'm going to say, a union of orphans: A union of those who are sourceless. And the result is that you become bonded—in bondage—as two separated miserable souls who are using each other by one means or another to be able to have experiences of joy.

Now, when you abandoned your Father and you joined with a Brother or a Sister and that becomes your primary relationship, that's a special relationship. It's not a holy relationship. And you will bind yourself to misery and the misery will be amplified. Why? Well, it's like trying to be a light-bulb

lighting up without being plugged in. And it takes *a lot of effort* to try to light up and be illuminated when there's no juice. And actually, illumination never occurs but boy does the stress occur. You see?

Love is FREEDOM. To look for it by placing yourself in bondage is to SEPARATE yourself from it.

What is Love? Well . . .

. . . God created Love as He would have it be, and gave it as it IS.

It's the very substance and essence and purpose and function of you—of your Being. That's what it is. But you forget that when you get into special relationships and obligations to not violate mutual agreements and to live up to them because after all, the whole purpose of the mutual agreements is to arrive at a point where you have proof of your respectability as an orphan—as someone who is fatherless and motherless, who has no inheritance and therefore, who has no intrinsic worth. And the more you all hold onto each other to get proof and verification of one's value, it can only bring misery.

And you know why? It's because special relationships were never meant to be able to perform that function. You're already the Act of God—God in the act of Being Himself right now, right where you are—is which constitutes You, your Being and your function. And so your *value* and your, I'm going to say, respectability is not only intact it is awesome.

And so, when you say, "Father, I'd rather not pay any attention to that. I'd rather look at it fresh, all by myself without Your Perspective. And I want to look at it with Joe over there or Mary over there and we're going to mutually come to agreements and understandings and definitions of meanings that will prove to each of us our intrinsic value and worth." You see?

R-r-r-i-i-p-p . . . the plug got unplugged, the juice is no longer flowing and there's no way for any acts of these unplugged ones to have a Real experience of freedom and of love emerge . . . or joy.

What would you say . . . what would you say the fundamental element is that causes the spontaneous experience of joy and gratitude and thanksgiving? It isn't what anyone does or doesn't do. It's the experience of freedom. It's simply that: The experience of freedom. The experience of not being in bondage. The experience of not being governed by anything less than that which is in the act of being you at this moment, which is an act of Love because it's God Moving.

For the love of God, . . .

. . . in other words, to find the love of God.

For the love of God, no longer seek for union in separation, . .

. . . you know, . . with other orphans—other sourceless ones, other miserable ones—who have this incredible inspiring task of working together by creating definitions and meanings and mutual agreements that allow each of them to begin to feel valuable and worthwhile without having to connect with their Source. You see?

Again:

For the love of God, no longer seek for union in separation, nor for freedom in bondage! As you release, so will you be released.

Okay, key words there:

As you release, so will you be released.

So, you see, I want you to arrive on Thanksgiving Day in a state of release. And so I'm saying start tonight. Start now to release, so that you can be released.

Oh, what does that mean . . . “release”? It means: Release your other orphan friends that you have special relationships with exclusive of the Father. Release them from your expectations. *Release them from your expectation that they had better express greater respect for you* by withdrawing their willingness to violate the special relationship or break the mutual agreement. Stop requiring them to be respectful.

Now let's be careful. There's a need for respect to be expressed. But here's the thing: Stop requiring others to be respectful before you will allow yourself to feel the joy of your Being that the Father is placing in you at every moment by virtue of *His act of Being* right there where you are. You see?

That's manipulation and control. “Oh, you'll be the death of me yet. Oh, you're making me miserable. Oh, you'd better stop making me miserable because we have an agreement to treat each other well.” You see?

You have a technique available. You have a tool. It's called the two-step. It leads to the experience of the holy instant, where union with God is experienced and where the laws of God prevail no matter what other jerks are or are not doing. That's freedom. And out of that freedom comes joy and love and thanks or gratitude.

As you release, so will you be released. Forget this not, or love will be unable to find you and comfort you.

“Oh, but I don’t want love to find me and comfort me, I want Joe to find me and comfort me. I want Mary to find me and respect me and stop all this bullshit! I want my children to find me and treat me with respect.”

Well, you know what? They may not. And you had better stop preferring to have them find you and respect you or to have them find you and love you. You had better stop preferring that over your willingness to remember to engage in the holy instant . . . practice the two-step and say, “Father, what is the truth here?”

“Well, the truth is, that you are My beloved Son, you are My beloved Daughter in whom I am well pleased. I’m withholding nothing of what I Am from you. You are free.”

“Oh-h, well, I really think I want to seek union in separation a little bit longer. I think I still want to try to get . . . you know, my jerk partner or my jerk children or my jerk parents to . . . you know, just simply recognize that I am worthy and respectable. You know, I’m going to hold out for that a little bit longer.”

Well, then go ahead and ruin your Thanksgiving Day. But remember, you don’t have to . . . *remember that you don’t have to!*

You’re not here to carry out the mutual agreements or the penalties for breaking the mutual agreements. That’s not what you were created for. That is not what you are here for. That’s not what the act of God, that God is engaged in right where you are right now, is supposed to mean. It means freedom.

But you know what? You’re going to have to start using the recipe for Thanksgiving.

There is a way in which the Holy Spirit asks your help, if you would have His.

Well, again the question is: Is it the Holy Spirit’s help you want, or is it the orphan you’re having such a hard time with that you want help from. You want to extract from him or her or them an acknowledgement of respect—it’s only right that you have it, after all, you raised them, didn’t you? . . . or you’ve given your life to your partner, didn’t you? . . . for a certain number of years, long enough . . . long enough to justify good treatment.

But, you see, you're looking in the wrong place and you're trying to extract the experience of freedom from something that can't give it. And most of all, your engaging in it blinds you to the fact that you are already in possession of infinite freedom because no matter what you've come to believe, you are still the result, the evidence of God in the act of being Himself. And the love that constitutes your being has no meaning except as it's Creator defined it by His Will. You see?

I'm not talking about approaching this coming Thanksgiving Holiday with rhetoric of gratitude. "Oh, I'm so happy to be alive today," when you're not. "Oh, it's going to be a beautiful day today," when you don't think it is. No, I want you to treat this subject of thanksgiving more seriously, not so that you can't feel joy, but so that you recognize that is significant.

Thanksgiving is the natural spontaneous result of the experience of freedom. And freedom is your experience when you withdraw from engaging in manipulating others or in being offended by the attempts of others to manipulate you and instead practicing the holy instant and saying, "Father, in spite of what they are doing, in spite of their malicious intent, in spite of how awful they know it will make me feel, in spite of all of that what is it my Birthright to be experiencing? What is the truth about You and me, and in light of the truth about You and me, about them? What is the truth about it?"

You must switch your focus of attention and stop trying to extract freedom from a place it doesn't exist. And release those who seem unable to give it to you, from the obligation to give it to you, before you're willing to feel your joy.

Go ahead and feel your joy. The call for others to respect you will still be present. But you don't have to use it as justification for feeling really miserable and letting the world know about it in an attempt to get the world to behave differently and treat you nicely with respect so that you can feel your respectability without having to connect with your Father. You see? That's the point.

Seeking freedom without connecting with your Father will not bring freedom. It will bring all sorts and levels of bondage. That's the only way it works.

And so I encourage you to have a wonderful week. And I encourage you to behave in a way . . . you know—using the recipe for Thanksgiving—to arrive at Thanksgiving Day not feeling bereft at all.

Because that's the way it should be.

Okay, I look forward to being with you next week.

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
Chapter 17 – Section – THE BRIDGE TO THE REAL WORLD
¹ *Sparkly Book – p. 394, 1st Full Par. / JCIM – p. 165, 2nd Par. In Sect. / CIMS – p. 331, Par. 60*
Chapter 16 – Section – THE CHOICE FOR COMPLETION
First Edition – p. 321, 2nd Par. / Second Edition – p. 345, Par. 2

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A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj, November 20th 2010
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