

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

August 7th 2002

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

Good evening. Well, after having started this book with the last chapter, we will go to the beginning, having a basis for understanding the book from the beginning.

And we'll start here. Ordinarily we read one paragraph at a time, and pass the book on, but since that page is so short, if you'll just read the whole page starting there.

****INTRODUCTION ¹***

This is a course in miracles. It is a required course. Only the time you take it is voluntary. Free will does not mean that you can establish the curriculum. It means only that you can elect what you want to take at a given time. The course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. It does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance. The opposite of love is fear, but what is all-encompassing can have no opposite.

This course can therefore be summed up very simply in this way:

*Nothing real can be threatened.
Nothing unreal exists.*

Herein lies the peace of God.

**[Note: Quotes from A Course In Miracles]*

Thank you. I am not going to comment on that but will allow it just to sit with each of you.

You will find that the meaning of the word "miracles" in the book, *A Course in Miracles*, does not mean the practice of spiritual control over your experience that results in the correction of the human condition through spiritual power. It is not an

act of great wonder, like walking on water or raising the dead or healing the sick, although those are the things you are likely to see. But those are not what constitute the miracle.

The miracle has to do with what we've been talking about while we were reading Chapter 31. The miracle is the shift in consciousness that occurs when you abandon the agreed-upon definitions, and you assume nothing, and you listen deeply within after having inquired of God or the Holy Spirit or your Guide, to know what is the truth here or the truth in a particular situation and letting the clarity of the true answer in. This causes a shift, an inner shift, a shift of perception. And as the perception shifts, your experience shifts and you notice that there's been a healing or you notice that a relationship has been inspired with love once again, where it seemed to have been absent, and so on.

So as we begin the first section here:

Chapter 1 THE MEANING OF MIRACLES

. . . and the . . .

Principles of Miracles

I want you to keep this in mind: That a miracle is a shift in consciousness, in *your* consciousness that occurs as a result of being defenseless against, having no defenses against the experience of God's point of view. This can happen on purpose as a result of becoming still, as a result of meditating, as a result of consciously setting aside your best ideas, your best opinions, and so on, and consciously listening for clarity. Or it can happen spontaneously in what would be called an unguarded moment, which again is one of those moments when there is no defense present, and then you have a sudden inspiration, a sudden insight, a sudden shift of perception. And it is that shift of perception that changes the way you see things that is the miracle.

So, let us begin with Principle Number 1.

[Principle #1] There is no order of difficulty in miracles. One is not "harder" or "bigger" than another. They are all the same. All expressions of love are maximal.

Ah-h . . . so a miracle is a shift of perception in which you see something truly, and the seeing of it as it is constitutes Love expressed. And Love is always maximal. Love is always uninhibited.

A miracle is a light bulb going on. It's an, "Aha!" that occurs within you. An, "Aha!" that is a response to an experience of clarification that reveals the divinity of something in your world so that it transforms your perception of the thing you're looking at. And it also links it as an inner experience with God, so that you know

there's an absolute relationship there, and that the thing you are looking at about which you have a transformed perception has no capacity to be there except as the expression of God—and that therefore it is holy.

Okay. Continue.

[Principle #2] Miracles as such do not matter. The only thing that matters is their Source, Which is far beyond evaluation.

In other words, the transformation that *you* experience occurring in your world because of your transformed vision is not what is significant, that Lazarus came forth from the tomb was not what was significant. What was significant was that Love revealed that he never died and simply uncovered that fact, so that no one was having a lingering illusion going on in their mind blinding them to his presence. What was significant was that it did in fact demonstrate that there is a God, and it demonstrated that Lazarus was not separate from Him. And my Love of the Father and of Lazarus was all it took in order for the illusion of death to fade from everyone's mind and therefore, from their vision so that they saw him.

Continue.

[Principle #3] Miracles occur naturally as expressions of love. The real miracle is the love that inspires them. In this sense everything that comes from love is a miracle.

Indeed. You know that I'm constantly encouraging you to not join with each other in your mutually-agreed-upon definitions of everything. And the reason is, because when you are caught up in this mutual agreement, you have blocked yourself from what I'm going to call the ever-present communication of God to you. You're in an ongoing state of ignoring that communication. And that communication to you is a communication of Love because that is what God is. And when that Love is *not* resisted or ignored by you, it fills you and blesses you, transforming your vision, which therefore causes your world to look more like the Kingdom of Heaven, because that's what it's been all along.

I invite Paul to let me respond to everything, which really means I invite him to be joined with me constantly so that there will not only be miracles at gatherings, and so that he won't suffer the frustration of feeling separate between gatherings, and mostly because doing so gives him practice at being normal, divinely normal, which will speed up his remembrance of being Awake so that he might own it once again. And the same thing applies to all of you.

To be stuck in the mutual agreements turns your existence into a uselessness, and you miss the Joy of what is confronting you. You miss the Joy of the Kingdom of Heaven that you're right in the middle of. And you miss the experience of your integrity because of what you Are and can never stop being—the Presence of God in expression.

When you are joined, all that you can be is Love. And all that can follow that are miracles.

Okay. Continue.

[Principle #4] All miracles mean life, and God is the Giver of life. His Voice will direct you very specifically.

Oh, I'm going to interrupt you.

All miracles mean *life!* . . . not an approximation of life . . . not 50% of life . . . not just a little bit of life . . . not a rugged experience of life . . . but *life!*

All miracles mean life, and God is the Giver of life.

Again, it's what I was just saying, that when the shift in your awareness occurs and you see something as it truly is, you recognize its inseparability from God, which is, as I said, another way of recognizing or knowing, having an experience of its holiness. And when I say "holiness," I mean it is something that inspires awe. It isn't just something extra wonderful.

Okay. Continue.

You will be told all you need to know.

His Voice will direct you very specifically, just as I do with Paul. And you will be told all you need to know. Wow, what a support. What a thing to miss out on just for the thrill of being able to make your own decisions without having to check in with Daddy.

Continue.

[Principle #5] Miracles are habits, and should be involuntary. They should not be under conscious control. Consciously selected miracles can be misguided.

Indeed. And so this is one reason for often asking God or your Guide or the Holy Spirit, "What do I need to know here?" . . . without assuming that you know what you need to know or that you know what really needs to be addressed.

When you genuinely and undefendedly listen within for God to reveal His perspective, you don't know what in your consciousness is going to shift, which is part of the wonderfulness of it, except that if you've been used to enjoying a sense of control and a pride at having control, then the feeling is that if you let the shift happen wherever it will, that it deprives you of something. It deprives you of being able to say afterwards, "I made that happen."

Miracles are never under your control because the shift in consciousness only occurs when you are *yielding* to the Father's will, when you are *listening* beyond your habitual thought processes.

I'm going to read the next one.

[Principle #6] Miracles are natural. When they do not occur something has gone wrong.

Well, first of all, that means that miracles aren't *special* and miracles won't make you *special*. Miracles are, you might say, automatic. The shifts in perception, the shifts in consciousness naturally and spontaneously occur when you have an unguarded moment, an undefended moment. It is really that simple.

And when they do not occur and it says, "something has gone wrong," it means that they're not occurring because you're putting your mind to a use that is not natural to it. And you're attempting to be something that's not natural to you—an independent authorizer—instead of the willing observer of what God is being, so that you might be able to be the acknowledgement of what God is being and thereby glorify God. And by virtue of that experience of the revelation of God to you, having who you Are truly revealed to you as well.

Continue.

[Principle #7] Miracles are everyone's right, but purification is necessary first.

Yes, yes, yes. Pur-if-i-ca-tion. Um-m, how many lifetimes have you been pur-i-fy-ing yourselves? [audience laughter] And how many of you know that it's going to yet be a long time before you're purified because that's what your spiritual book says, and because there are—as in this book—365 lessons. "Wow! Well it's at least going to take 365 days for my purification. So I won't look for it on the second day. I won't allow it because I've got to have my Pur-if-i-ca-tion."

Purification is necessary. What does purification mean? It just means letting go of that which isn't a part of you. When you have a glass of pure water, you have a glass of water that has nothing extraneous—to what water is—in it. Well, all you need to do to purify yourself or your mind, is to abandon thinking . . . is to stop thinking and start listening, to stop being an authority and asking for help from some place other than your experience. You see?

Purification is what happens when you reach out to God, and therefore your presence isn't so filled with *your* definition of yourself. It's that simple. So, when you see that . . .

. . . but purification is necessary first.

. . . don't think, "Oh, my God! I won't be able to do it" or, "I know it will take a long time!"

Don't let that word scare you. It just means . . . it means taking off the thing you need the least. That's all. Letting go of the thing that isn't useful. Letting go of what gets in the way of your experience of what you could never have stopped being—which is the Presence of God—though, you might say that you are the capacity to recognize, and therefore acknowledge God and what God is Being, in other words, Creation and thereby glorify God, which is an act of gratitude. Because when you see the truth, you are filled with gratitude for it being true. Not true as opposed to false, but sheer truth, simple truth, elicits gratitude. And in that gratitude, you are infilled with what God is Being and you Wake up, meaning you see things as they Are. You see the Kingdom of Heaven where you had been looking and saying, "It's just the world."

Okay.

[Principle #8] Miracles are healing because they supply a lack; they are performed by those who temporarily have more for those who temporarily have less.

Isn't that interesting? They're supplied by those who temporarily have more, except that the one who temporarily has more from his standpoint has less, because there's purification. And so there's less of his definition of himself in the way. There's less of an authority present. There's less of an independent, causative agent present. And the supply of the lack to the one who temporarily has less is actually going to one who thinks he has more, because he still thinks he's in charge. You see what I'm saying?

He still has himself on his mind as an authority, as someone to be in control, as someone to practice defense against a polarized world that will get him if he's not prepared. He's encumbered with definitions and concepts about himself and about the world, which means he apparently has more there where he is than what God is Being. You see? So it's a paradox.

Miracles are healing because they supply a lack; they are performed by those who temporarily have more . . .

. . . but actually have less, personally speaking . . .

. . . for those who temporarily have less.

. . . but have more encumbrances, personally speaking. You see?

Waking up is really a discovery that you're a lot less than you thought you were. In fact, that everything that you thought you were isn't part of you at all. But, even though losing that may seem to be a significant loss, it's just a matter of discarding

the thing you need the least. And what's left *uncovered*, what's left revealed by the absence of the encumbrances, the extras, is the Christ—You in your actuality, You in your reality, You in your innocence, You in your purity that was never soiled, no matter what you thought, You in your inviolability that's incapable of being threatened and You inseparable from the Whole, outside of which there is nothing that could oppose you because there is no outside to Wholeness.

Continue.

**I thought I understood it until I saw you before you were baptized . . . that you were teaching, and so you were having less than the people that you were teaching?*

**[Note: Students – commenting or asking a question.]*

Anyone who is truly teaching because they have the Vision of God have less personality, have less ego, you might say, and they are giving to those who seem to still have a lot of ego. You see?

So, by your standards from your present frame of view, you can understand that one who is standing with God has more than you have—more that matters—but really has less than you have because he or she is not encumbered by the ego beliefs and structures and concepts and mutual agreements and laws that the commitment to those agreements are held to. You see?

Okay.

[Principle #9] Miracles are a kind of exchange.

Ah, why do you think that is?

Give me a minute.

Anyone else, either?

Exchanging old ideas for new?

You said exchanging old ideas for new?

It's just the way that it works.

Joining.

Joining. Thank you.

Indeed. Love is always an involvement. Love is always the recognition of the reality of another—a brother, a sister, a tree, a dog, a cat, a bird. It's an exchange because there's a recognition of what is Real in each other. You see? It can't happen in a

vacuum. You can't be the Presence of Love all by yourself. A miracle cannot occur without involvement. How can Love find expression if there is no object of your affection? So miracles are a kind of exchange. "A kind of exchange?" Yes. It's a kind of exchange because it's not really an exchange at all it's really a recognition of Oneness. You recognize yourself in your brother.

And that's what you... when we're in touch with our Guidance, that's the Communion, that's the Oneness.

That's right.

And that's what we're to do with each other, is find the Oneness. And we do. And we know when we're right on the beam with each other.

That's right.

And it's a good thing.

Continue.

Like all expressions of love, which are always miraculous in the true sense, the exchange reverses the physical laws.

Because it's Spirit?

They bring more love both to the giver and the receiver.

[Raj Repeat] They bring more love both to the giver and the receiver.

It reverses what you would call physical laws because in the giving away, the giver doesn't lose.

You benefited when your friend Lazarus was raised from the dead. Lazarus benefited. And that's what we're talking about.

That's correct. That's correct . . . Just a moment . . . You will sometimes hear it said that someone who is a psychic or who has a spiritual gift, if they make the gift it will shorten their human life. You see? It takes something which is expressing oneness and unity and blessing and saying that in making that gift, it depletes the giver. You see? And it doesn't. And it is very important to see this.

All miracles mean *Life!* Not its opposite, a form of which would be called depletion that opposes the nature of physical law, which is that if Paul gives you a dollar, you are a dollar richer and he is a dollar poorer. If he gives you his car, you now have the car and he doesn't. You see? Now what were you going to say?

You were obviously moved by the Father to connect your Love. You said your Love was all it took to raise Lazarus . . . I mean that wasn't coming from any sense of lack in you, like you missed your friend.

No. Remember I said it was my love for God and my love for Lazarus. My love for God . . . my attentiveness was to God first. That provided me with His Vision. And His Vision was an experience of the fact that Lazarus was not dead. And that realization couldn't help but be extended to Lazarus as he appeared to be to everyone else, because that's what the *knowing* was about. That's *who* the knowing or the clarity was about.

And so, it wasn't because I missed him. It was because in not having any other perspective than the Father's, there was nothing else for me to see or experience but Lazarus' uninterrupted Life, which blessed him because he was not at a point of gathering his vision about himself from his Father. So my clear vision provided the environment in which Lazarus could recognize the truth about himself as well, so that Lazarus came forth. I did not have to go in there and bring him out, which I could have done. I could have helped him further in the realization by going in and bringing him out. But he *recognized* my vision of him and he came forth even though he was still wrapped up. It did not inhibit him from moving out, behaving or being in a way inconsistent with being dead. [laughter in voice] You see?

Missing someone states an already existing attitude or sense of loss, and there's no way there could be a miracle from a sense of loss.

That's why whenever you are wanting to be a healing presence for another, you cannot start with the way they appear to be at the moment. Because if you do that, you're lost yourself, or your loss [laugh] . . . your loss is established for you. So no, never agree with the appearance and never agree with what a brother or a sister says to you about their condition. You go to God, "What is the truth here?" And, as well as listening for words—all of you—I encourage you to be open to an experience of the truth about them.

I can see how the thread is weaving into everything with Gift. And I was contemplating on what Raj said at the Leiston Abbey—which I mentioned to Paul earlier today—about the purpose of sex, which was to identify the other's Wholeness to them. And it occurred to me that every interaction that we have to expand on, that is to identify the other's Wholeness to them. And that, if that be the case, then there is nothing lacking in that moment between us. And it said here that we temporarily give to those who temporarily have less, those who temporarily have more, but the established bond, or the established realization, is that we have it. We're coming from a place of having, not a place of not having.

Anyway, I mean I can see how this is really bringing all this . . . I mean it's not just in a certain situation. It applies to everything! When we interact with each other, we are there to be . . . to identify the other's Wholeness. And

that's . . . that's not money, marbles, to everything from what I'm getting from this.

That is absolutely correct. Yes.

And it's really thrilling because what it does is it establishes trust, a deep knowing, a joy, safety. If I give, I know that I have and that you have, and there's no loss or there's no maneuvering for a position, "Am I gonna get a deal?" or "I'm going to have an advantage over you." I mean, all that is gone.

Of course.

Anyway, I just wanted to share that. Thank you.

Yes. That, of course, will throw a great monkey wrench in business. We won't go there today.

Next.

[Principle #10] The use of miracles as spectacles to induce belief is a misunderstanding of their purpose.

Yes. You see belief isn't what's wanted anyway. You are suffering from *beliefs*. You *believe* it's just the world. You *believe* you are a mortal. You *believe* that physical bodies ultimately decay and die. These are all *beliefs* which you frighten or comfort yourselves with. But all of your beliefs are what are distracting you from the experience of Reality, from the experience of what you really Are and what your brother or your sister really Is.

So, I'm not going around rendering great miracles to get you to believe something, because that's shifting one belief for another belief. Belief is irrelevant. Experience is relevant. And experience comes when you manage to one degree or another to set your beliefs aside. And it's an inside job.

That's why you can't just keep raising the dead.

Microphone.

I was just thinking when you were talking earlier, but you didn't keep raising more and more dead. You raised Lazarus, or that happened, and that was enough. It didn't need to keep happening, like you were trying to prove something.

There were a couple of other indications . . . I mean a couple of other situations where I did.

But not dramatically.

But mind you it wasn't for . . .

Proving it.

It wasn't for . . . it wasn't for the purpose of raising the dead. It was always for the purpose of glorifying God. It was always for the purpose of, I will say, *impressing* others with an *awareness of God*, not my capacity to perform miracles. Always it was to inspire the clearer consciousness of the actuality of God, because only that could change the lives of the observers. You see?

Okay.

[Principle #11] Prayer is the medium of miracles. It is a means of communication of the created with the Creator. Through prayer love is received, and through miracles love is expressed.

There you go. Prayer is not asking something of God, but opening up to God so that you might be filled with whatever He would reveal to you. Prayer, as I've said before, is really a matter of saying "Yes" to God, not making demands of God.

And when you say "Help," when you reach out to God, when you temporarily abandon self-reliance, when you abandon relying upon the self you think you are and you say "Help" to God, you are saying, "You are welcome in here, God. You are welcome to come in to me. I am saying 'Yes' to You. Not 'Yes' to what I want from You. I am saying 'Yes' to You."

And the shift of awareness, the shift of consciousness occurs, and your experience and perception of the situation, or your brother or sister, changes and healing transpires. Love is expressed. Love is impelled by your recognition of the truth of your brother. So your receipt of what the Father gives that causes the shift of perception causes a spontaneous impulse of Love from you to your brother in the clear acknowledgement of the truth about him that has just been revealed to you. You see, that's what it means.

[Principle #12] Miracles are thoughts. Thoughts can represent the lower or bodily level of experience, or the higher or spiritual level of experience. One makes the physical, and the other creates the spiritual.

Thoughts can represent the beliefs and concepts associated with the mutually-agreed-upon definitions that all of you have committed yourselves to, and it makes the Kingdom of Heaven look like nothing more than "the world."

When, on the other hand, you abandon the mutually-agreed-upon definitions and you relinquish your commitment or manage somehow to weaken your commitment to it by reaching out beyond it, I'm going to say, it apparently creates the spiritual. In actuality, it *reveals* the Kingdom of Heaven that has always been there. It uncovers and reveals the spiritual. I want you to be clear on that because this is not meant to imply that you are going to acquire a capacity to create. That is very

appealing to your ego, which you are not free of at the moment, and we do not want to reinforce your ego.

Continue.

[Principle #13] Miracles are both beginnings and endings, and so they alter the temporal order. They are always affirmations of rebirth, which seem to go back but really go forward. They undo the past in the present, and thus release the future.

That might seem complicated but it is simplified in the last sentence.

They undo the past in the present, and thus release the future.

And what that means is, it releases the future from the framework of your mutually-agreed-upon definitions that you otherwise would have held the future to. Beginnings and endings, in the same sense that for every door that closes, a door opens. It's the ending of a belief and the beginning of clarity. It's the ending of being subject to the distress of being out of your mind and the pleasure of experiencing your Sanity. You see?

So it's about beginnings and endings. Endings of things that weren't real, and beginnings of things that always have been Real, but which you had been ignoring. And so, the beginnings are really a return to what you knew before you joined in this exciting experience of mutually-agreed-upon definitions and the distortions of the Kingdom of Heaven that they subjected you to.

Continue.

[Principle #14] Miracles bear witness to truth.

Stop there.

Wow. That means they're meaningful.

Miracles bear witness to truth.

You see Lazarus came forth. The truth that it bore witness to, was that life is deathless. But the most significant truth of all was that it demonstrated to those there that there really is a God, because these people knew me like you know each other. And they did not have the belief that I, like them, had a capacity to raise the dead—they knew it wasn't a talent *I* had, because I was just like them. Lazarus and his sisters were lifelong friends—we grew up together.

So, the miracle points to something bigger, they *bear witness to the truth*.

Continue.

They are convincing because they arise from conviction.

And how is conviction arrived at? It's arrived at by having set aside any personal capacity you might think you have to accomplish something, and saying, "Father, help. Father, show me the truth here." And when you do that and stay out of the way and don't block the influx, the shift of perception occurs. And what you find yourself experiencing, you can only describe as something that you know from the tips of your toes. It is a knowing that is unalterable, because truth *recognized* as truth is a recognition also of its unalterability. And so, you find yourself spontaneously experiencing *conviction* about the truth that you *know*.

So, miracles *arise from conviction*. Not conviction that you've drummed up with great emotion. Not conviction that you have generated by being intense or creating a sense of the strength of your physical presence. But conviction that comes from actual experience, which is available to every single one of you if you will just let God reveal the truth to you, by being curious in the most mundane daily situations, about the most mundane things.

Continue.

Without conviction they deteriorate into magic, which is mindless and therefore destructive; or rather, the uncreative use of mind.

Yes. And all that means is, what happens when you're engaged in the practice of and the modification of the updating of your mutually-agreed-upon definitions. It is a...

Like shamans. That shamanism stuff, too.

Yes. However, don't misunderstand. There are those who truly are shaman because they truly are listening beyond their best judgments and their best concepts. And it is because of them that the word "shaman" came into existence. It is meant to identify conscious Christs.

But, if conviction is not arrived at through the experience of revelation, then, as it says, the miracle of it deteriorates into magic. And so, there are what are called shamans, who think they caught the gist of a holy experience and without the conviction that accompanied the actual recognition of the Holiness of something, they began to practice a way of looking at things, a way of thinking about things, but it is all coming from the head.

Same with the gurus and the Baba's.

Sure.

I remember that they had to be registered finally. And then they [laugh]... they had to go and register.

Yes.

And the Geishas in Japan, too.

Yes. So...

Without conviction they deteriorate into magic, which is mindless and therefore destructive; or rather, the uncreative use of mind.

Which is actually . . . the uncreative use of mind is the non-use of mind. When you are using your mind to indulge in a daydream, you are using your mind to ignore what's really going on. *That* is the uncreative use of mind.

And that's what most of us are doing most of the time.

Yes. But discovering that you have another choice.

This is a perfect breaking point. This is a long section, and we will continue with this next week. This is good.

Thanks.

You are welcome.

****Quotes from A Course In Miracles***

****Students – commenting or asking a question.***

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
INTRODUCTION
Chapter 1 – THE MEANING OF MIRACLES
Section – PRINCIPLES OF MIRACLES
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