

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

August 28th 2002

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

Now, before we begin I would like to make a simple point. We are in the process of reading a rather interesting book—a book whose intent is to be transformational. But I want everyone to know that the greatest disservice you can do to yourselves is to try to find a book or a teaching or a thought system, that is so precise and consistent and tight in its explanation of things that you might feel that all you had to do was to learn how to be as precise as the book is, or to live the principles of the thought system precisely in order to Wake up. Why? Because in doing that you would neglect to be open to the conscious experience of the Living Presence of God and the Movement of Creation Itself.

This is a very important point. It's ultimately important. Whatever you read in this book should, if nothing else, be causing you to become open to the intimate and immediate experience of God, which I promise you is not going to conform to *any* thought system, because what God is being is forever new. Those who would look for a thought system, precise and consistent in the layout of its principles, who grab onto it, are in an act of self-protection against the actual experience of God, because they are looking for something unchangeable, something absolutely dependably unchanging. And that's not what the experience of Creation is. And to become open to the *Living* experience of the *Living* God is going to be, as far as the ego is concerned, an insecure experience. Undependable because unpredictable.

Now, we've been reading about miracles and we've been finding out that miracles are a sudden shift of perception, which occurs when you are not reinforcing your current mindsets, your current mutually-agreed-upon definitions, and in a sense, are not reinforcing your defenses. And in the absence of those defenses, [snaps fingers] a light bulb can go on, an "Aha!" can occur, a realization that constitutes a shift of perception that changes the way you are seeing and experiencing everything.

A miracle isn't something you arrive at through reason or the intellect. It is as though a new way of seeing things is inserted into your awareness, which transforms your awareness. And it's unexpected.

Now, if anyone thinks they know *what* a miracle is going to look like or *how* it ought to appear, it's going to be a long time before they experience one. Because when the actual miracle occurs they'll say, "That wasn't a miracle," or their confidence as to what a miracle is, will cause them not even to see it when it occurs.

You have to be willing to let yourself become vulnerable, undefended, unprotected if anything new is going to penetrate your preconceptions. It's simple.

So, with that in mind, let's begin with Principle #33.

And I'm going to invite everyone not to fiddle with this end of the microphone, since it got turned off halfway through the gathering last meeting. [audience dismay] So hold the mic up here and don't fiddle down here.

**[Principle #33] Miracles honor you because you are lovable. They dispel illusions about yourself and perceive the light in you. They thus atone for your errors by freeing you from your nightmares. By releasing your mind from the imprisonment of your illusions, they restore your sanity.*

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

That pretty well restates everything that we have been learning so far.

Miracles honor you because you are lovable.

The interesting thing is that miracles reveal your lovableness to you. And in uncovering your lovableness to you, they honor you. In a way that statement is sort of like saying, "water is wet." Miracles honor you because you are lovable. Miracles honor you because they uncover what you really Are, when you didn't know that's what you really Were. That's what dispels the illusions about yourself.

Let us go on to the next Principle.

[Principle #34] Miracles restore the mind to its fullness. By atoning for lack they establish perfect protection. The spirit's strength leaves no room for intrusions.

[Repeats] The spirit's strength . . .

Spirit is substance. Substance is spirit. The substance of everything you see in this room is spirit. The substance of you is spirit. The substance of your very Being is spirit.

Miracles restore the mind to its fullness.

They reveal its indivisibility. They reveal its innocence. They reveal its all-inclusiveness.

By uncovering the absence of lack, they establish perfect protection. Not in the sense of encircling you with tanks and enemy aircraft guns and a better wall of defense, but they establish perfect protection by uncovering to you that you're naturally invulnerable—that vulnerability is nonexistent. So they establish perfect protection by uncovering the fact that you are not in need of protection, because there is nothing unlike you to be defended against.

And the spirit's strength . . . the strength of the substance of your Being leaves no room for intrusions. When the miracle establishes in you the truth of you as your conscious experience, there simply is no room for the intrusion of anything *and* there is the conscious realization that there is nothing unlike you that can intrude upon you. And so you can be at perfect peace.

Continue.

[Principle #35] Miracles are expressions of love, but they may not always have observable effects.

They may not always have observable effects, but they will always have effects. Love is always transformational, but the transformation isn't always visible. When the miracle is a shift of perception about the Kingdom of Heaven, that you are calling "the world," then you are going to find what you would call visible evidence of a miracle. You will find visible, tangible transformation—the disappearance of the evidence of disease or injury, the disappearance of a blight on a complete forest, the closing of the holes in the ozone, the purification of your water systems without a mechanical process being employed.

Because no matter how screwed up your world appears to have become through thoughtlessness, Creation hasn't for a moment been altered. And when a shift in perception occurs, the changes to Creation that it looked like man created, will no longer appear to be present to be disturbed by. And it can happen instantaneously. You can't have a sudden shift of perception without perception being changed. So be careful not to argue against, for any reason, the manifest, evident, tangible embodiment, we'll say, of the Kingdom of Heaven where "the world" seemed to be. This is very important.

****May I ask a question about the practicability of manifesting? For instance, if there's . . . right now I'm confronted with a soft spot in my driveway, okay, that I'm talking about digging up and reworking. Okay. Is it practical for me to expect a miracle—for me to wake up one morning and go out there and the driveway to be totally repaired all by itself?***

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

It's very practical to have that expectation. But, you're not here to designate what the miracle is going to be.

Ah, I see. I see. I see. So . . .

The miracle may be someone coming up to your door saying, "I've lost my . . . I have a family. I'm not able to find work. Do you have anything I can help you with?"

I see. So my job is to see God expressing Love in the form of Creation. And then as I experience that in what I see all around me, things begin to happen.

That is correct.

And I don't . . . I don't choose if it's my teeth, or a driveway, or whatever, that are healed.

That is correct.

I see. I see.

You cannot be the manifestor of a miracle.

However, something that all of you hate to look at are your needs. You are insulted by being needy. And so you do everything you can—create employment for yourselves, create a roof over your head—so that your needs are apparently met and you don't have to be conscious of the fact that the needs are still present. Do you see what I'm saying? You cover up the fact that you need things by arranging your experience so that you're not confronted by the need. In other words, you need to eat, so you get a job so you can buy the groceries so you can eat, and you eat well every day and you become unconscious of the fact that you *need* to eat.

The ego insists upon your being unconscious of your needs, because if you were conscious of your needs, you would know that you needed help in order for them to be met and you would reach out to God.

What was the dynamics with Virginia as far as her healing was concerned?

There was a need. There was discomfort. There was decay in her teeth. And she could not ignore it. And she decided not to go to the dentist, which some people would say was ignoring the situation. But that isn't all she did. She prayed. She had no idea how the answer might come, but she prayed humbly, and she didn't fret about it. She prayed and she let it be. And she prayed and let it be. And in the absence of manipulation, but the presence of her awareness of the need so that she continued to ask, the need was met—or up to this point, partially met. And I encourage you to expect more.

I'm trying to.

Indeed.

Now my point is that although you cannot determine *what* the miracle will be, if you will pay attention to your needs, you will find your needs always bringing your attention to the point where Movement is going to occur. And in honoring the need and acknowledging it, and knowing that there can be no unmet need, your attention is where the miracle is about to happen, if I may put it that way. And by having your attention there, without conscious intent to make something happen, to know exactly what it is you need to ask for help about, you bring yourself into alignment for a miracle, which you will discover shortly is referred to as miracle-readiness.

In places where they're starving, like Africa, Asia, there's definitely the need and those folks definitely have their attention on that need. But they . . . there's not expectation and consciousness. Is that why that situation continues?

The problem is that they think that they are physical beings living in a physical world where abundance and lack are determined by physical forces—weather conditions, conditions of the land, and politics. And they have convinced themselves that these are the factors that govern their situation and their lack. And they have a mutually-agreed-upon definition that they're all binding each other with by continuing to energize it through reaffirming it specifically by mutually complaining about the injustice of it and never for a moment saying, “God, help.”

It's more, “Why is God doing this to me?” which doesn't help at all.

That is right. And the “Why is God doing this to me?” is part of the liturgy of the mutually-agreed-upon definitions that they are committed to.

Thank you.

Did you have a question?

In my own activity that I conduct, would it be . . . Remember I used to have a prayer list and I used to work off of that. I always prayed to Jesus. But is that . . . some way should I integrate acknowledging my needs as part of what I do, as part of when I become still and conscious and open up to guidance and awareness? Should I make that a part of that activity? Consciously going through, like I know I need this and . . .

It would be an excellent thing to do. If you did it well, you would find that a lot of what you think are your needs are wants, or are things that you have determined are what will answer the problem. Needs themselves are very basic—like not hurting . . . not being hungry . . . not being ill . . . not suffering . . . like having an object of your affection is a need . . . being able to extend affection is a need.

You will usually be able to find out what your needs are by paying attention to where you're uncomfortable. Because where you're uncomfortable are the places where you're blocking or resisting being conscious of the truth, because you have a preference of your own. So your needs—your need not to hurt—when you pay attention to it, brings you to a realization of what you need in order not to hurt. And when you find where you are uncomfortable, and you ask for help—without trying to figure out the answer for yourself—the Father or the Holy Spirit or your Guide or myself will help you realize what will answer the need so that you can choose again. Choose again, instead of what you had committed to.

So, if someone were to ask you right now, “What do you need?” you would list off all the things that you don't have. But you wouldn't list all the things that you do have. You would not see them as a need because you have them. And yet there is need there that is met.

And so, I guess what I'm trying to convey to you is that you are always needy. As I also said, that is humiliating to the ego. But in the realization that you are needy, you realize that you cannot afford to be alone. And if you can't afford to be alone, then your bottom line need is to reach out and say, “Help.” Why? Because at the bottom line that's what breaks the isolation, and at the bottom line that is what begins to disintegrate the dream—the illusion of separation.

It's very difficult to be haughty when you're needy. Humility is recognizing that you're needy and not objecting to it, not resisting it.

“In my defenselessness my safety lies.” In my neediness my fulfillment lies. In my humility God can reach me. In the absence of arrogance, the Father's will for me cannot help but register with me. And when it registers with me and I Wake up, I will realize that being Awake does not annihilate or do away with my neediness, and does not raise me up into a position equal with God as a co-creator. But rather what it does is it makes me realize that I of myself can do nothing.

And the way I become co-creator with God is by letting Him move through me. It's only in this way that you can discover that the Presence of God moving as Creation is not an arrogant act, is not a willful act. It's not an act of power. It's just God Being. And every aspect of the Infinite Being of God is full of integrity just because God is indivisible. And His Movement of Creation is inseparable from you because you are no longer claiming some personal, private position in some imagined divine organization chart.

Okay.

Are you needy? I mean as a . . .

Absolutely. I have said to Paul that he must stand as the door. You will find references in the Bible where it says, “Lift up your heads all ye gates, and lift up your

heads all ye doors.” Paul stands as the door, you might say, letting me through. I am standing as the door letting God through. I am not standing here in some position of authority. I’m standing here in an act of obedience and cooperation without the insertion of any personal willfulness on my part, and letting God be Love expressed, extended, embracing, including you and everything that exists.

Over here.

Is that where we each experience Joy in the Movement of Love?

Absolutely. And you all have those experiences now and then. It is not necessary for you to become absolutely totally defenseless in order for God’s Love to find expression through you and bless your fellowman. It’s just that it doesn’t happen very often because there’s an immediate reassertion of your right to be yourself on *your* own, on *your* terms, for your purposes against someone else.

I’m certainly familiar with that.

I am not picking on you here.

I understand.

Yes.

Thank you. Thank you very much

You are welcome.

Let us continue.

[Miracle Principle #36] Miracles are examples of right thinking, aligning your perceptions with truth as God created it.

This is pretty obvious at this point, isn’t it? And it happens [snaps fingers] spontaneously, not by design, not as a result of effort on your part. It happens in the absence of effort. It happens in the moment of defenselessness. It even happens in a moment of preoccupation with something outside yourself. You see?

Let us continue.

[Miracle Principle #37] A miracle is a correction introduced into false thinking by me. It acts as a catalyst, breaking up erroneous perception and reorganizing it properly. This places you under the Atonement principle, where perception is healed. Until this has occurred, knowledge of the Divine Order is impossible.

Well, let me make something perfectly clear. One of the most valuable elements that can precipitate your ability to let the penetration of the miracle occur, is the

experience of need recognized together with the acceptance of your incapacity to meet the need while the need yet remains to be met—while the need still needs to be met. In other words, in the recognition of the need and an acknowledgement that you can't meet the need, the need does not disappear. It remains pressing upon you the requirement for change to occur.

But when you acknowledge the presence of the need—stop denying it, stop glossing it over and acknowledge the need, you might say, feel the pain—and then fully realize that this is something you cannot deal with and you accept that incapacity, the arrogance of thinking you do have the capacity to deal with it fades and now you're in a state of humility. And in the state of humility, the absence of arrogance, the Father can reach you, I can reach you, the Holy Spirit can reach you and uncover what is needed for correction, through a shift of perception which you are quite capable of making—a shift that you're quite capable of making and one, which you do make because the revelation of it is so clearly true to you. And then the pain is gone. The distress is gone. The experience of need unmet is replaced by need met, but not need annihilated.

Are you beginning to glimpse what I'm getting at? When need is met, it doesn't mean you're no longer needy. It simply means that you as the direct Expression of God can only be the full Expression of God when you're not attempting to be the expression of your will, of your best sense of yourself, of who you've been taught you ought to be, and so on. As the direct Expression of God, all that you are is derived from God. And when you yield to that, you find all your needs met. The only need that you thought you had that isn't met is that in the act of yielding to God, you are not moved into a place of independence from God where now you're able to be independent perfectly. And so the need is met without the need going away.

Arrogance . . . so arrogance is blocking this connection. And I come up against it and I can't quite see it. And I, of course, ask for help, but I don't really hear this fluttering of angel wings and all at once filled with good feelings and connections, so I, you know, maybe I can't even get in touch with, you know, a real good solid connection.

So I'll listen to a tape and then maybe, you know, sometimes there'll be like rage creep in and I just have to just go and follow my breath and calm myself down. Is this, I mean when this is going on, is this appropriate way to work with this? Just like tenaciously stay after my peace the best that I can find it—listening to a tape when I can't hear you inside—every time I remember, remember and go back, and I mean just stay at it. When it's not working just stay at it the best I can.

That is correct.

And I am receiving help, even though it's not exactly in the terms that I would . . . there's help all the time that I'm doing this. There's support.

Always.

Always.

In fact when you are headed in the wrong direction with great determination, you are helped to get to the most difficult place the fastest. In other words, you are helped for your illusion to be as uncomfortable as possible as quickly as possible so that you will get to the point of choosing again more quickly.

Yeah. Yeah, that's it, isn't it? The puppet strings are short.

That is correct.

When you really allow yourself to feel the need, you will naturally find within you the determination to sit with the need, rather than gloss it over, and give your attention to the answer to the need without distraction, no matter how long it takes.

Steadfast.

Indeed. Most of you say, "Well, I don't really have time to give that kind of attention to this or that." And then you find yourself suddenly flat on your back in bed, apparently ill. Now you say, "I can't do anything else. I'm unable to get up and go to work. I'm unable to attend to all of these other things that I gave priority to. And you know what? Considering how I feel, my getting clear about myself is about the most important thing I can think of. My becoming clear about what my needs really are, is something I'm not going to begin to be distracted from, because at the bottom line I need not to be faced with the apparent option of ceasing to exist." Of dying, in other words. Ah, so here's a need that's ever present.

Your wants and your needs are getting clarified.

That's right. And mostly they'll be getting clarified because you're not able to justify all of the usual distractions that keep you from being aware of your need.

Now your need not to die is a misunderstanding. It's a distortion of your need to be aware that your Life is unalterable. It's unalterable. It's eternal. It's uninterrupted. Why or how? Because, *God* is being you, you're not being yourself. *God* is being you.

A sperm and an egg setting into motion a body is not what is keeping you in existence, or making you. And most often when one arrives at basic moments like this where one's need is looked at squarely, when that happens one tends to ask God for help. One tends to reach out. One tends to break the isolation.

And when there is humility in that, when your personal helplessness is felt and accepted, you don't cease to exist. You don't disappear. You are inspired by the infilling of the Spirit of God. And boy, are you grateful. And you cry. You cry because it's all so simple and you see it. You cry because there is joy. You cry

because there is relief. And miraculously you get better. And the better you get, the more you say, “Now I can get back to the things that took precedence over my being aware of my need,” instead of staying in that holy place of need and need met being inseparable.

I'm getting a lot of help to stay there without needing to get put in my deathbed. I mean there's . . . I just see now a lot of what's been going on the last week is just getting a lot of help.

Indeed.

Not letting me get it. I don't have to go to my deathbed to get that serious about it. To get . . . just caring about getting back in touch.

That is wonderfully true.

Yeah.

And all of these things I am saying are for you, but they are for all of you as well.

This is me, Paul. Did you complete your . . . Who is reading?

I did and more. [talking to next reader] So you're reading right there.

Had you completed that? Okay.

[Miracle Principle #38] The Holy Spirit is the mechanism of miracles. He recognizes both God's creations and your illusions. He separates the true from the false by His ability to perceive totally rather than selectively.

Indeed. You know the saying is you can't solve the problem from the level of the problem. And yet that's all the ego does. By asking for help, you open yourself up to the Holy Spirit. And what did I say the Holy Spirit was? The Holy is your Divinity held in trust while you dally with the ego.

That's the table being what the table really is now. Right?

Microphone.

The Holy Spirit is the table being what the table is really now beyond my perception of it, and the glass being what the glass is right now beyond my perception of it.

Well, the table and the glass being what they divinely Are right now, they are being right now regardless of the Holy Spirit. They are what they are because God is what is being It. The Holy Spirit is that which recognizes what it really is as God is being It, and recognizes how you are perceiving it, and then begins to close the gap

between your misperception of it and what it really Is by introducing the sudden shift of perception in your mind.

The Holy Spirit's doing my job while I'm asleep.

The Holy Spirit is your divinity.

I mean, to recognize that Which Is Real, that's what the Holy Spirit is . . . that's that activity.

That is correct.

And that's my job. That's what I'm suppose to be doing is acknowledging What's Real in everything.

Absolutely. But you can't do it without asking for help. You can't do it without reaching outside of the boundaries of your current definition of yourself, and therefore the boundaries of your current capabilities as you have defined them or believe them to be.

Mind you, the table, the glass, the chairs, it's all Reality going on as it divinely is right now, but there is a gap between what It is and the way you're experiencing it, because of the conscious choice to determine on your own what a thing means and stand in mutual agreement with another as to that definition. That's why I keep saying, the simplest way to break the illusion is to have curiosity. Curiosity to see what a thing really Is, because that's what disentangles you—disengages you from your commitment.

Okay.

[Miracle Principle #39] The miracle dissolves error because the Holy Spirit identifies error as false or unreal. This is the same as saying that by perceiving light, darkness automatically disappears.

Yes. What is unreal has no presence. What's unreal is imagined, but has no actual presence, any more than darkness is the presence of something measurable. Light is the presence of something measurable. Darkness is the absence of something measurable. So, in the shift of perception that occurs that causes something that is unreal to be seen as actually unreal, it's obvious to you that's there's nothing there to occasion reaction, or defense, or even any distraction from Reality.

It isn't that it uncovers what is unreal so that then you can dispose of what is unreal. It is not like the difference between the tares and the wheat, which are two different kinds of Real things that are indistinguishable from each other until a certain point in their development. Your commitment to your determination to see things biased by *your* will causes you to see aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven as different from what they are to you. But when the involuntary shift of perception occurs where the

unrealness of your creation, of your biased perception of Reality is uncovered to you as not real, you're free of the misperception. You're simply free of the misperception. And there's nothing there to deal with or dispose of, because where you were looking and seeing a distortion of Reality, Reality now is uncovered and it gets your attention. You see?

[Miracle Principle #40] The miracle acknowledges everyone as your brother and mine. It is a way of perceiving the universal mark of God.

This we have already elaborated on for quite a few weeks. We will continue on to the next.

[Miracle Principle #41] Wholeness is the perceptual content of miracles. They thus correct, or atone for, the faulty perception of lack.

[Repeats] Wholeness is the perceptual content of miracles.

When the shift of perception occurs and you see something as it truly Is, you discover that it's far more than the simple object you thought it was, whether it's a wall, or whether it's a toe, because you recognize the Presence of God in it. You *recognize* God as the source and the substance of it.

The simplest thing then becomes awesome, literally, and as I have said before you realize that the substance of it is Love and that it is radiating Love—radiating Love that embraces you. And you also realize that this Love is the very substance of you, and that you and it are engaged in what you might call a mutual appreciation society, in a relationship of mutual Love. A Love, which is not exclusively owned by either one of you, but is itself the clear experience and the deep knowing that You and It are One. This is wholeness. And it is a blissful experience beyond anything you might imagine.

I tell you this so that you might realize that when you're being curious to see what a thing really is, because you realize that you don't know what it really is, and you express this curiosity, you are priming yourself for an awesome experience. Not just an intellectual "Aha!"

I have a little bit of confusion here about wholeness and neediness. If we're always needy, then there's the feeling that you're not whole, that something's missing. So am I mixing terminology here?

When the choice was made to have a point of view different from the Father's—just for the heck of it, just for the fun of it—you abandoned a union in which the experience of wholeness that I just described was the experience of Being. The fact that you weren't God but that God was all there was of you was not an experience of neediness, because there was no thought of having a different perception of Being. But nevertheless you were not God. You were God's Expression of Himself.

Neediness and wholeness were indistinguishable and indescribable because there was no will but the Father's in effect.

In Reality we would not even need to talk about your being the Expression of God and therefore being in need of Him, because in the absence of a separate will being exercised, your wholeness, the Allness of God constituting you, was inseparable from the fact that you are His Expression. In other words, the need was inseparable from the inviolable experience of wholeness. Are you with me so far?

When you say the need is part of the wholeness, you still have a need.

If you are the Expression of God, then that means God is your Source. And that means that you are not *self*-assertive. You cannot be *self*-realized. You are . . .

So that's the need.

That's the need.

To be joined. And then that's where the wholeness comes from.

Exactly.

I'm with ya. Now . . .

And when that wholeness is being experienced, there is no experience available to describe through the use of the words "neediness" and "wholeness."

I gotcha. Now it sounds like we went from color, living color to black-and-white. Even what we see in the sense of all that . . . were there some of us who went, "Whoa! I don't want to be in black-and-white," and they immediately switched back into the . . .

Oh, yes.

We didn't do that. [laughing] [audience laughter] What a dummy!

[audience comments which were too hard to hear]

And be stuck in stupid rest.

But you are still safe. You are still safe even though you're scaring yourselves to death. You're still safe.

Well when I momentarily switched back from black-and-white to color, you know, just at that moment of experience that I asked for and got, it frightened me to be there. It was like too much. I couldn't handle it. I had, you know, I mean [laughing] it scared the hell out of me.

Indeed.

So all this is about getting comfortable with being there.

Indeed.

Thank you.

And the miracles, the shifts of perception, which I introduce or the Holy Spirit introduces, are always as much as you can bear without being overwhelmed. Because the road back into your Sanity must occur in the context of Love if you are to dare taking each step.

I want to make sure I've got this right because you're giving us another way of looking at neediness. We tend to associate neediness with lack. The starving children in Africa are very needy because they lack food.

Indeed.

You seem to be saying that it's important for us to have needs because by having needs then those needs are filled.

No, it's not important for you to have needs. You have them whether you're acknowledging them or not.

Yes. Well, and if we do have them, that must mean it's important.

Yes.

In order . . . and we have them in order that they may be filled? And that neediness being filled is the Movement of Love?

It is. Because in their being filled by the Movement of Love, rather than your personal, separate, private skill at manipulating the world, leads you into an experience, an awareness of God being part of the need met.

Okay, I'd like to put this on a practical level. I have this need to house my family and my landlord asks me that I pay rent every month.

Yes.

Okay. Now I work in a way where I make my living off what people give me out of the goodness of their heart. I'm a clown. I make balloons. I give them to the kids. People put money in my bucket. My family, we live on a day-to-day basis with what comes in and we've gotten pretty good at doing that. And we enjoy it.

And every time I've been in a tough spot with like needing the rent, to not knowing where rent is going to come from, I pray and God always comes through. Sometimes maybe a couple of days later than I wanted, but the money always shows up. Not always as much as I wanted but always as much as I need. And so even though I've taken this big step to trust that the money will always appear without knowing where it's coming from each time, and it always does appear, it's still a very awkward place to be. There are times when it seems very wearying.

It's only awkward when the pull of the status quo, of the mutually-agreed-upon ways of things working that everyone else is embodying in their lives tempts you or invites you to abandon trust for the apparent security of controlling your good into your experience.

It's a big temptation.

It is.

But I'm much happier now than when I did it all on my own by getting a big paycheck.

Yes. It constantly keeps alive in you the awareness that there is a God and you have a partnership. And in that partnership your safety lies.

And so you are also breaking the agreement, the mutually-agreed-upon definitions, and not acting independently and thus being part of the leaven that leavens the whole lump—the whole mental condition which really is better called the whole mental conditioning that everyone is suffering from. It's not easy because there is little support from it. There is little support for it from your peers. And it is also difficult because your habit, your prior participation in the mutually-agreed-upon definitions has not dissolved completely. But you get help in persisting in this apparently radical stance.

So I should be thankful that I have this financial need each month?

Yes, because it keeps God square in your face.

Yes, it does. [laughing] Okay. Yes. Alright. Thank you.

You are welcome.

I find it curious that our friend over here who's so serious is a professional clown. [laughing] [audience laughter]

I have a little different take on this. Maybe I'm seeing my part or what's before me is not struggling with this dialogue about neediness and wholeness and not being caught up on a deathbed or paying the

rent, but I can find bliss in being curious about what a leaf is. And that's going to also leaven the whole lump. Correct?

To whatever degree you look at a leaf and find the Presence of God revealed to you, yes.

Bliss.

Yes.

Wholeness.

Yes. But, don't neglect the needs. Don't let the blissful experience of what a leaf really is cause you to neglect a hungry child, or an angry or grieving wife, or an unresolved hatred that's eating away inside you.

Or homeless clown.

Yeah. I'm just hearing all this dialogue about it and I see this like a . . . this invitation to engage all of these concepts and struggle with all this. And I remember you sitting up there saying, you know, just . . . it's right here in this leaf. And Buddha under the Bodha tree, and I mean everywhere. Everywhere there's this opportunity to join with this and see more than what we thought there was and to experience bliss outside of this concept of starving children.

But he didn't sit under the tree forever after the realization. He became involved.

He was transformed.

He was transformed and became involved with his fellowman.

Right. Where he wasn't . . . traditionally his position [was] he wasn't involved.

That is correct.

Right.

And he could have chosen to sit under that tree in bliss indefinitely and be stuck, as you said, in stupid rest. And that is not what it's about.

And not be stuck in stupid trauma either.

That is correct. If there are children starving in Africa, and starving adults, starving tribes, starving communities, and it is because they have their mutually-agreed-upon definitions of the situations and circumstances. And part of the mutually-agreed-upon definition is that it's bigger than they are and they can't do anything about it.

Now any one of them could reach out to God and experience the miracle of a sudden shift of perception that allows him to be a blessing in terms of breaking up the current mutually-agreed-upon definition that is binding everyone.

But, it's not appropriate for you . . . or you . . . any of you, to sit here and say, "That's going on over there and I don't need to be involved." If you can't do anything about it because you don't have the means to gather food together and take it over . . . give it to them . . . you can at least be conscious of the need so that each night before you go to sleep you can ask the Holy Spirit, and you can ask the Guides of each one of those people, to help inspire them to hear the answer to their need which they *are* feeling and to realize that it is unnecessary for them to be bound to it.

Their need is my need.

Their need is their need, and your need is to be willing to be the conscious Presence of Love that embraces them in the desire for realization to occur that at the moment they can't conceive could happen.

Every night before Paul goes to sleep, he says a prayer. He asks for those who are the Guides and the Supporters, you might say, of those who have asked for healing . . . where the words he says are, "May we please have a healing session for everyone who has asked for healing, even if it was only expressed as hope with little faith." Even if it was only expressed as hope with little faith, because Paul can ask *with faith*, you can ask *with faith* for those who have little faith, but still hope. You see?

I can't willfully determine to get my enlightenment from a leaf. I mean I have to be lead to this place where this bliss is going to come from. I mean I can't, like you said, I can't decide about the miracle, or I can't decide about that place. That's given to me. Not from something I can choose.

Yes. Why are you talking about the leaf when I was just talking about . . .

It's just not my choice, whether it's a . . . I mean I can't choose to make the starving child displace either. I can't . . . I mean it's . . . what I'm saying is it's not . . . it's not my choice where that joining and bliss is going to come from. Whether it's, you know, the bodha tree, or the child, or the angry wife, or the starving clown. I mean, it's where it comes to me is not something I can choose.

You know where the need is, and the need is where the miracle is present to occur, and so you can ask for the miracle where the need is.

Yeah. Yeah. It's obvious.

You do not know what the miracle is going to look like, but you have the capacity to care and ask for the miracle where the need is.

There is a need in America for all Americans to be able to sleep peacefully and fly peacefully and be without anxiety. But you know what? There are other countries in the world who are living each day under the same threat compounded 5,000 times and they deserve your prayer for them as well as your prayer for the Holy Spirit to help uncover to you your capacity to feel your peace, and not be threatened by what can't actually harm you.

You can't break the isolation without having an object of your affection and without expressing affection toward that object. And then let your attentiveness be to the needs so that you may then be open to the realization of how the needs can be met, and not leave your brother until the need is met, anymore than you end up leaving yourself on your sickbed until you're no longer dying—because you're willing to stay with the need until the meaning of the need is revealed to you.

Is this the source of invention?

No, inventions are of the intellect. Miracles are of Love.

There is much to sit with tonight . . . abide with. Do not let my discussion about need be perceived as a heavy subject. The experience of need is an experience of a point at which need met is ready and waiting to emerge in your conscious awareness. Need is where an unconsciousness of your wholeness is *the particular* unconsciousness of wholeness that you are ready to release and have replaced by greater clarity. Need is where the miracle is pressing against a very thin spot in your current defenses.

You have many needs that you are not conscious of, but they are not needs that you are at this moment capable of penetrating or seeing through. Where you are uncomfortable is where your ego has gotten real weak and the miracle is just under the surface. So I have been talking about something positive, affirming, and you don't need to be afraid of looking at your needs. Looking at the needs of your fellowman will cause you to behave compassionately if your willingness to look at their needs arises out of Love. And that is what is needed.

With that I will say, "Good evening."

[Audience] Thank you.

You are welcome.

***Quotes from A Course In Miracles**

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

*A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
Chapter 1 – THE MEANING OF MIRACLES
Section – PRINCIPLES OF MIRACLES (Miracle #33)
First Edition – p. 3 / Second Edition – p. 5*

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, August 28th 2002
© 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 Fax: 360-881-0071
Website: <http://www.nwffacim.org>
E-Mail: paul@nwffacim.org