

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

July 13th 2008

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

You know, if you choose to become utterly simple within yourself, if you have a desire to back off from all the complications, all the technicalities of what goes on with you, with a desire to get down to the fundamental of you, what you might call the fundamental motivation or fundamental drive, you'll find that you come to a place, not as an intellectual thing, but as an experience where there is silence and you feel an impulse to declare yourself—you feel a need, an urge, an impulsion to assert . . . make assertion. It's very much a place, a state of mind similar to that expressed by Captain Picard in Star Trek, where he says, "Make it so." You will find yourself at a very primal, fundamental state wherein you feel the need to make it so—to make something so, [chuckles] make anything so!

Now, in the making it so, in the making of something so, you are giving birth to yourself. The assertion is so primal, so back to basics, that you realize that in that assertion you are bringing yourself into existence—into existence as recognizable to others—recognizable, and present in life itself. And everything else that follows simply compounds that initial act of self-creation accomplished by means of making an assertion.

You will find, in that experience of allowing yourself back into that primal place, that it's as though until you make that assertion, you don't yet really exist. There's nothing recognizable about you. And this is why you must, under all circumstances, without fail, assert yourself—make something so, because that will make you so.

Now the way you make something so is by thinking something up. What the Course calls “making” as opposed to “creating.” And so, you assert yourself by having what could only be called, an original idea. It must be original in order to be recognizable as worthy of giving one’s attention to, else, the giving birth to yourself by virtue of expressing this original idea, will not occur fully. In other words, you will not be made so—fully—because if the thought, if the concept, if the idea is not original and worthy of attention by being original, you have not become something valid yet.

Existence on this basis is a matter of consistently and forever asserting yourself in order to make yourself real.

All of you, if you will take the time with genuine interest and genuine willingness to get past all of the surface mish-mash and sink down into that which is really fundamental to you, sort of casting aside everything that might be irrelevant so that you get down to the essential element, you will find this act that I’ve described, as an awareness of how you brought yourself into being as who you think you are. And you will realize how powerful the act seemed to be because you will realize that you used a tremendous amount of energy, we’ll say, to assert yourself—to make yourself *known*. And you will then realize that you are continuing to use that kind of force today in order to live your life, in order to live your life successfully with dignity, respect, and so on.

But I must point out to you, that although this will be your experience if you allow this to happen, it will not be an experience of who you truly Are. It will be an experience of what you seem to be, as an ego. And this is very important.

We are, every week, every time we get together, learning how to abandon that primitive act of self-assertion. Because the act of self-assertion is the introduction of thinking, which blinds you to and keeps you from experiencing what you truly Are.

Now the simple fact is, that before you utter this primal scream, as it were, this primal self-assertion, you’re very aware of being conscious. There is something there feeling this urge, you see. This, that is there, is pure awareness. This that is there, is the divine You that is all Knowing, that is inseparable from and un-separated from its Source, the Father—God. And the impulse to act, to give birth to yourself, is an act of creating something different from this pure infinite all-inclusive awareness that is the Presence of God being all there is to you and thereby you being absolutely and completely fulfilled.

This impulse to act independently as an assertion of you, so that you as who you want to be known as can become knowable, is the cause of what you call,

the human condition. It is the cause of sin, disease, and death. It is the cause of the experience of guilt. It's the enactment of shifting from first gear to second gear and becoming the orphan which automatically brings into play third gear, which is guilt and fear—inseparable guilt and fear.

There is no legitimate or valuable thinking. All thinking is an extension of the need to create yourself by virtue of independent self-assertion in order to make yourself knowable on your terms instead of the terms of Creation.

And so, although I constantly am saying God did not give you the capacity to think, and although I encourage you in many many ways to dare to abandon thinking, to move into the Silence with active curiosity and then listen instead of think, it seems as though I'm asking you to do something totally unreasonable, because that is all you are used to doing—is thinking and claiming your presence in the world, birthing yourself constantly in the world and to your fellow man. And you think that's normal. You think that is the meaning of life. You think that God gave you the capacity to do that and in doing it, you are indeed validating yourself when in fact, you are, by doing that, constantly obscuring who and what you really Are from yourself and your fellow man.

What is the only thing that makes you guilty? The only thing that makes you guilty is your behaving as though you're out of your mind . . . is you believing that you're doing something that God didn't give you the capacity to do. That which seems to make you guilty is you thinking as an act of self-creation, of birthing yourself, and becoming recognizably present, real and valid.

It isn't what you're attempting to do that makes you guilty, it's the fact that in attempting to do it, you have abandoned first gear, and you have taken up residence in second gear. And second gear always is absolutely accompanied by guilt and fear. This is important, because if you want to see and experience yourself as guiltless and if you want to see and experience your brother as guiltless, you're going to have to be willing to recognize that neither you nor your brother or sister have the capacity to think and actually accomplish anything. And therefore, you are innocent of anything you have thought up [chuckle] and believed about yourselves or about each other.

And you will realize that in order to experience your brother's innocence or your innocence, you're going to have to be willing to get beyond thinking or behind it, to back up prior to the thought. That's what becoming still does.

Your brother is innocent. He seems to be guilty because he's been thinking. And he feels guilty because he's been thinking. He's been operating independently and by his act of self-creation, blocking his experience of what

he is and was before he expressed that primal scream—that primal self-assertion.

You can say, “My brother is innocent.” But saying it doesn’t make it so. Saying it doesn’t mean you’re having the experience. Having the experience will only come when you are willing to get behind—come to that place *before* your thought—and in that place prior to thought, right now, which means, in the silence within you, in the peace within you, you are absent the experience of thinking but not absent the experience of consciousness—of awareness. And in that place, you can desire to know the truth about your brother. The truth about your brother that exists only prior to or behind whatever thoughts he’s employing in his act of self-assertion, or her act of self-assertion.

Don’t waste your time saying, “My brother is innocent . . . my sister is innocent . . . well they’re innocent, you know?”

Words don’t mean anything. You better be having the *experience* of their innocence. And the only way to have the experience of their innocence is to get into the experience of your innocence which means to back up *behind* the thought—the thinking—and get into the silence desiring to know what the truth is, and abandoning your own independent state of existence that you birthed by your self-assertion.

Then, you’ll be able to have the experience of your brother’s innocence or your sister’s innocence and you will have it along with yours. Because I promise you something: If you’re thinking and you’re finding thinking valuable, it is going to be impossible for you to look at your brother or sister and not make the absolute assumption that they are thinking and they are finding thinking valuable. Well, if you see that, you’re not seeing their innocence whether you say they’re innocent or not. Words are cheap.

You don’t want just words, you want the experience. Because the experience is the experience of God’s Truth. It is the experience of how things really Are. And they constitute the manner in which healing and transformation occurs for you and for your brother and sister. So let’s keep this in mind.

We’re going to be talking tonight about holiness—your holiness. Well, your holiness is always going to be covered up by your thinking. But it’s there prior to the thinking. It’s there now prior to the assertion of and creation of yourself that is accomplished by your thinking in this moment.

Your holiness and your innocence are both present now. But you don’t think of yourselves as holy. You sort of assign that to priests, maybe . . . or ministers, or “teachers of God.” And even then it’s by choice. It’s a vocation. It’s something they’ve chosen. But we’re talking about everyone being actually

holy. Not as a vocation, not as something you've chosen, but as a state of Being that you need to more and more include in your awareness of yourself as you do the most mundane things every day.

Now, let's go into the Book.

The link with which the Father joins Himself to those He gives the power to create like Him . . .¹

. . . meaning, His Sons and Daughters . . .

. . . can NEVER be dissolved.

It can't be dissolved because Creation is God's extension of Himself, you might say.

So . . .

The link with which the Father joins Himself to those He gives the power to create like Him . . .

. . . meaning you . . .

. . . can NEVER be dissolved.

It's a permanent, unalterable state of Being. Not something you have to gain and not something you can lose.

Heaven itself is union with all of creation, and with its One Creator.

Do you know what that means? It means that Heaven isn't a place. It means that Heaven is awareness.

Heaven itself is union with all of creation, and with its One Creator.

It means it is conscious awareness that isn't split, that isn't divided up into, we'll say, multiple personalities. It is awareness that is all inclusive. Inclusive of all of Creation, Heaven is that conscious awareness in which all of Creation is embraced and experienced. Something which you must be willing to allow by ceasing to think, by ceasing to do that which obscures the experience or that which is Heaven.

Heaven itself is union with all of creation, and with its One Creator. And Heaven remains the Will of God for you.

In other words, unbounded awareness of all that Is and union with It and awareness of Its union with you, and we might say no thoughts that are unknown, all thoughts of everyone being known by everyone so that communication is communion, that's the new normalcy—what will seem new to you, but it is what is natural. It is what is Real.

So . . .

Heaven itself is union with all of creation, and with its One Creator. And Heaven remains the Will of God for you. Lay no gifts other than this upon your altars, . .

What does that mean? It means, let that be the only gift you lay on your altar. Stop laying the gift of all of the fantastic thoughts you've come up with. Right now, you're laying all of your creations on the altar. All of these creations that have come out of this primordial need to express yourself and make your presence known by virtue of expressing original ideas of your very own, which causes you, by virtue of their originality, to be seen as worthwhile and truly valid.

That's what you have to stop laying on the altar, where right now, that's all you are laying on the altar.

Lay no gifts other than . . .

Heaven: The willingness to be the conscious awareness of all that Is.

Lay no gifts other than this upon your altars, for nothing can coexist beside it.

You see? What makes you innocent is the fact that all the thoughts you've thought are one of those things that never happened. If God didn't think it, so to speak, it was never thought. And the consequences of your thinking, therefore, don't exist as an actuality. And that is why you're innocent, because you haven't been doing what you thought you were doing, literally.

Lay no gifts other than this upon your altars, for nothing can coexist beside it.

All of your thoughts which you use to self-create yourself cannot coexist on the altar, actually, with the only true gift.

Here . . .

. . . on the altar . . .

... your meager offerings are brought together with the gift of God, ..

... which is Heaven, which we've said is not a place, but it is the unobstructed, conscious experience of Reality. It's the awareness of Reality, in which none of Reality is obscured to you or separated from you, in which you are inseparable from it. And communion of the wholeness of Creation is your experience. So ...

Here your meager offerings are brought together with the gift of God, and only what is worthy of the Father will be accepted by the Son, for whom it was intended. To whom God gives Himself He IS given. Your little gifts ...

... all of your wonderful, self-creative—meaning those things you've used to create yourself—all of those thoughts ...

... will vanish on the altar where He ...

... God ...

... has placed His Own.

The next subsection is entitled ...

THE RECOGNITION OF HOLINESS

The Atonement does not MAKE holy. You were CREATED holy. It merely brings unholiness TO holiness; or what you MADE to what you ARE.

So it brings all of these thoughts which you have used to create yourself, it brings those to the truth, it brings those to what you Are.

The bringing together of truth and illusion, of the ego to God, is the Holy Spirit's only function. Keep not your making ...

... in other words, all your thoughts, all of your creations.

Keep not your making from your Father, for hiding it has cost you knowledge of Him and of yourselves.

You see? “But, Father, I'd rather see it my way. See, you get your independence stance, you stand back and you keep your thoughts, they're yours. “Father, to heck with you, I'd rather see it my way. My perception is

what I'm going to validate and value and live by. Sayonara." But when you bring your thoughts, your creations, so to speak, your acts of self-creation that created an imaginary self, when you bring those to the Father, or when you bring those to the Holy Spirit they will be laid upon the alter in you and placed beside the gifts of God. Your gifts will become obviously valueless and you will gladly let them go, because that is what happens when what is Real and what is unreal are brought together.

Now . . .

*The knowledge is safe, but wherein is YOUR safety apart from it?
The making of time to TAKE THE PLACE of timelessness . . .*

. . . meaning, all inclusive infinite knowing now . . .

. . . lay in the decision to be not as you were.

You see? Here you were as pure awareness and then you felt an impulsion to assert, which God didn't create you to do and which there is no actual need to do, because Being was already whole and complete. And so you asserted yourself to bring yourself into existence on your terms.

*The making of time to TAKE THE PLACE of timelessness lay in
the decision to be not as you were. Thus, truth was made past, . .*

. . . in other words, the experience before self-assertion became what was, not what is . . .

. . . and the present was dedicated to illusion.

The present was dedicated to the self you were in the act of giving creation to, by virtue of continuing to assert more and more original ideas.

*And the past, too, was changed and interposed between what
always was and NOW.*

In other word, what always was, was initially the past when you made your self-assertion and seemed to create a new experience of self and identity and existence. But then the past—meaning you in your pristine and perfect state of mind, that became no longer the past—that was replaced by the history of your acts of thinking original ideas for the purpose of maintaining an ongoing creation of yourself, period. You see?

The past which YOU remember . . .

. . . meaning, the history of your original thinking for the purpose of creating yourself . . .

. . . NEVER was, and represents only the denial of what ALWAYS was.

Your preoccupation with yourself presently and preoccupation with your past, meaning the history of your self-assertions, don't constitute an actual present of an actual past. What came before this false experience of now and history, which at this point is an experience you had in the past, *that* is the truth of you now and is available to you now in your willingness to get behind your thoughts, which is another way of saying . . . moving into the silence.

Bringing the ego to God is but to bring error to truth, where it stands corrected because it is the OPPOSITE of what it meets, and is undone because the contradiction can no longer stand.

When you're willing to say, "Father," as though it's the first word of a prayer—which means you're reaching out to something outside of this self-created independent entity that you think you are—when you say, "Father," you are taking the first step to bring illusion to truth, because you are reaching outside the illusion.

Bringing the ego to God is but to bring error to truth, where it stands corrected because it is the OPPOSITE of what it meets, and is undone because the contradiction can no longer stand. How long can contradiction stand when its impossible nature is clearly revealed? What disappears in light is not attacked. It merely vanishes because it is not true. Different realities are meaningless, . .

. . . different realities. It's nonsensical . . .

. . . for reality must be one. It CANNOT change with time or mood or chance. Its changelessness is what MAKES it real. This cannot BE undone. Undoing is for unreality. And this reality WILL do for you.

[sigh] What you truly are cannot be undone and never has been undone, even through this apparently powerful self-assertion by which you gave birth to yourself, in spite of all the dynamics of that, nothing happened. And your continuing effort to do it continues to be, nothing happening. All it is, is something that stands as a preoccupation in your mind, distracting you from the direct experience of Reality, Heaven here, now.

It's time for the truth of you to become apparent to you. It's time for your holiness and innocence to be your experience. And someone is finally telling you that the way to do it is to stop thinking. And if meditation is the only way you can get back of, or behind, or underneath thinking, so that you're in the silence that constitutes pure awareness, then meditate. Do whatever it takes to allow yourself to be pure awareness. And be pure awareness in the grocery store. Be pure awareness in the bathroom. Be pure awareness no matter what you're doing, no matter where you are, no matter how you would have in the past defined the situation or circumstances.

Merely by being what it is does truth release you from everything that it is NOT.

But if you're going to have that experience of undoing, you've got to stop thinking, and you have to move into the silence. You have to dare to allow yourself to stop controlling the birthing of you into existence so that you might find that in the absence of that strenuous endeavor, you already exist whole—right there in the grocery store, right there in your car on the freeway, right there in bed with your wife, right there mowing the lawn.

Merely by being what it is does truth release you from everything that it is NOT.

If you let truth be more important to you than birthing yourself.

The Atonement is so gentle you need but whisper to it, and all its power will rush to your assistance and support.

What does that mean? That means that you don't have to assert yourself to get it.

The Atonement is so gentle you need but whisper to it, . .

In fact, the practice of whispering gives you a very direct experience of not being powerful—I promise you. It is very hard to be assertive in a whisper, [whispering] very difficult. In fact, it's so difficult that if you insist on continuing to whisper you will begin to whisper intelligence rather than force. [Chuckling] You will find ideas to express through whispers, which by virtue of their intelligence will be motivating, not by virtue of the vigor and force with which you whisper. You see?

So . . .

The Atonement is so gentle you need but whisper to it, . .

Well, this is a key, also. Because when you do meditate, when you do, do whatever helps you move into the silence and into the peace of your Being, any desire that you might express from there, any desire that arises in your mind out of your peace, will find fulfillment if the desire is whispered, if the desire is gently placed, if the desire is almost silently placed, because that's when the least amount of willpower, of willfulness is being expressed. And because you are expressing or giving expression to a desire which has emerged from the peace, in the silence of your Being, it really is a matter of you cooperating with that movement rather than being the creator of it and subsequently the authorizer of it through willfulness or force. You see?

And so the act became an act as a result of awareness, and moved into action by virtue of your continuing to be awareness, not by virtue of your becoming an actor.

The Atonement is so gentle you need but whisper to it, and . . .

. . . indeed . . .

. . . all its power will rush to your assistance and support.

That is what you will find yourself experiencing when you act from your peace, when you be from your innocence, your holiness.

You are not frail with God beside you.

That's a wonderful experience awaiting you. You're also not *powerful*, but you are omnipotent.

You are not frail with God beside you. Yet without Him you are nothing.

What do you mean without Him? Well, when you birthed yourself by asserting yourself through the expression of a thought that was original, you were being without Him—you were being independent.

. . . without Him you are nothing.

In other words, [chuckling] everything you thought you've been being is something that never happened, as we discussed last week.

The Atonement offers you God.

Well, . . .

The Atonement offers you God.

The Atonement offers you truth. The Atonement offers you Reality, Atonement offers you Heaven—the awareness of all of Creation without any separation from any of it, where you experience all Knowing. It doesn't offer you this thing that you have birthed out of a primordial expression or assertion of an original idea or thought that you used to establish yourself as a valid presence.

The Atonement offers you God.

It does not offer you, [chuckling] it does not offer you what you've been having, and what you've been suffering from.

The gift which you refused is held by Him in you. His Spirit holds it there for you.

I've said in the past, "Your divinity is held in trust while you dally with the ego."

The gift which you refused . . .

. . . which is Heaven, the conscious awareness of all of Reality . . .

. . . is held by Him . . .

In other words, your right Mind . . .

. . . is held by Him in you. His Spirit holds it there for you. God has not left His altar, though His worshippers placed other gods upon it.

You've placed your fantastic, in other words, fantasy- like creations, all of your thoughts, all of your definitions, all of your mutually agreed upon concepts and so on, you have placed on the altar—cluttered it up, as it were, with distractions that never really took up any space because they're not Real. But you put them there.

God has not left His altar, though His worshippers placed other gods upon it. The temple still is holy, . .

. . . [whispering] you still are holy . . .

. . . for the Presence that dwells within it IS holiness.

The presence of what? The presence of the conscious awareness of Being that is You.

In the temple holiness waits quietly for the return of them that love it.

When you begin to love it, when you begin to get tired of what you're birthing, you will return, and it waits for you. Your holiness waits for you—that which is nothing more than your right Mind awaits your return to its embrace.

The Presence knows they will return to purity and to grace.

Listen to this, remember it:

The graciousness of God will take them gently in, and cover all their sense of pain and loss with the immortal assurance of their Father's Love.

Cover all their sense of pain and loss of what? Oh-h, all of your cherished thoughts by means of which you've given meaning to your life and to yourself. In fact, you haven't just given meaning to life and to yourself, those thoughts were used to birth you. And if you think you've done a pretty good job of it, you're likely to experience a sense of loss as you let go of it because something in you is daring to prefer what you're coming to know is a truer experience, a fuller, a more enjoyable, a holier experience of what your Being is all about.

So . . .

The graciousness of God will take them . . .

. . . you . . .

. . . gently in, and cover all their sense of pain . . .

all your sense of pain . . .

. . . and loss with the immortal assurance of their Father's Love.

. . . your Father's Love.

There, fear of death will be replaced with joy of living. For God is Life, and they ABIDE in Life.

No longer in this sense of life that you've birthed, this imaginary sense of life that you've birthed.

The Presence of holiness lives in everything that lives, for holiness CREATED life, and leaves not what It created holy as Itself.

So, I want you to be with this for the coming week. I want you to dare to allow for the idea that thinking is not *ever* valuable, that listening is. And that your Salvation lies in getting back to the place before the thoughts emerge, so that you might stop creating yourself by asserting yourself and ending up with an illusion.

And I look forward to being with you next week. And I look forward to the discoveries you will be having. I love you all.

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)

¹ *Sparkly Book – p.336, 2nd Full Par. / JCIM – p.141, Par.3 / CIMS – p. 282, Par. 37
First Edition – p. 270, Par. 2 / Second Edition – p. 290, Par. 5*

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A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj, July 13th 2008
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