

# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

## STUDY GROUP

### WITH RAJ

September 14<sup>th</sup> 2008

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THIS IS A ROUGH TRANSCRIPT.  
THIS COPY IS NOT IN ITS FINAL FORM  
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Good evening. And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the Internet.

What if you weren't the center of the Universe? What if you weren't the appropriate object of your affection? What if nothing was about you? What if everything was about everything else? What if your function was to be that which is fully conscious of everything giving preference to the quality of relating to everything, including everyone?

What if everyone was important but you weren't on that list of everyone?

As we progress through the *Course*, you might begin to have the feeling that everything isn't about you. After all, it says that the way for you to wake up is to look into your brother's eyes and remember God. It doesn't say go and stand in front of the mirror and look at your handsome or beautiful self—look into your beautiful or handsome eyes and remember God.

It also says that in the act of having an object of your affection other than yourself, and caring about someone else—everyone else—with an intent to be genuinely present with them without inserting between you and them any interpretations, any concepts about them that you have made up, any judgments, any fears, and on and on . . . it says, that in doing that, and making the gift of the pure awareness that you find yourself experiencing, you will learn about yourself. What you find yourself able to give others, because *they* are the object of your affection, is an act which results in *your* education, your learning about who you Are.

Now, one of the things that you learn about who you Are, is that you're not an authorizer. You could say, you are a responder. You are that which stands in receipt of experience that comes from your paying attention—not from asserting anything, but letting in and being the receiver of experience.

What if you are here to be the full conscious experience of Being—in which the full conscious experience of Reality, of the Kingdom of Heaven that you're currently calling earth and universe?

PAUL: I'm sorry. This is me, Paul. I lost it.

RAJ: What if your function is to be the conscious acknowledgement of everything—the full conscious acknowledgement of everything? What if you are that which lets “all that is” register with you without resisting it in any way and without interposing anything between you and it? What if that is the purpose of Being? What if that is your purpose?

You know, if you'll stop and think about what I've described here, you'll find that it applies to God, too. You think God has Himself on His Mind? Do you think God stands overlooking and overseeing everything and feels bad because Henry and George and Mary “down there” are preoccupied with things and aren't paying any attention to Him, and He feels lonely and sad and left out and hurt? No. It's not His function to “get.” It's not the function of God to gather or get.

The Bible says, *and God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good.*<sup>1</sup> The response was an acknowledgement of its goodness—of its Godness. Creation is a gift and God's acknowledgement of it is a gift.

Now part of the problem that all of you face in the process of waking up, in the process of any course of study you take for the purpose of waking up, is that there is an underlying question that you bring along with you. And that question is, “What am I going to get out of it? What new capacities will I acquire that will make me more effective, more respectable, more recognizably good?”

“What will I get out of it?” Well, if you dare to let in what we're learning and what I'm teaching . . . if you will let it in, you will find that you're learning that you're not going to get anything out of it except a rather consistent kick in the seat of the pants to move you off of your self-appreciation, where you are the center of the universe and where you're getting something out of everything, and actually dare to give your attention to everything else with innocence, without conditions, without agendas, but with a simple love-filled intent to not let anything at all stand between you and what you're giving your

attention to, so that you might see it for what it truly is. And in so doing, you will find out who you truly Are.

And so the unselfish act of giving, totally, without any possibility of “getting” being included in the equation, will cause you to come back into your right Mind, where you’re willing to give and give and give and give the acknowledgement of what is Real in each and every thing because that is your function, that is your purpose, and the awareness of the fact that that is your purpose causes you to truly know who you Are—truly come into an experience of conscious fulfillment of your Being.

That isn’t very ego-satisfying. But I will tell you that it is Soul-satisfying, because that which is real about you experiences its reality and unity reigns. Conflict cannot exist there. Harmony is actualized without opposition.

Now, we ended up last week talking about the fact that long ago we said this *Course* will teach you what you Are—restoring to you your Identity. We talked about the fact that Identity is shared. That which you truly Are is something which is shared and I just described that act of sharing—of giving and not getting—and that the means of the sharing is what the miracle is.

And so, continuing on tonight with the next section called . . .

*... THE TEST OF TRUTH 2 ...*

... it says ...

*Yet, the essential thing is learning that YOU DO NOT KNOW.*

I know . . . you keep hearing this in one form or another as we read along, and it flies right in the face of all that is meaningful to you. “What the hell do you mean I don’t know? Of course I know. I haven’t gotten this far without knowing something?”

But I will tell you, that in order to get out of the bondage you are in, in order to get out of the experience of being subject to sin, sickness and death, you are going to have to step out of or beyond what you already know, because it hasn’t woken you up. It isn’t what does the trick.

And so, . . .

*... the essential thing is learning that YOU DO NOT KNOW.*

And I’m going to say, the essential thing is learning that you do not know and not being offended by it. Because until you’re willing to say, “My goodness,

you know, I really may not know what is important to know and what I've thought is important to know may not be important to know. And therefore, I'm willing to look in a way I haven't been willing to look before. I'm willing to consider that maybe I do not know. Maybe I do not know the truth."

Continuing . . .

*Knowledge is power, and all power is of God. You who have tried to keep power for yourselves have lost it.*

In other words, those of you who have tried to become powerful through the use of coercion and manipulation and the abuse of your brothers and sisters, have lost power because you've lost your awareness of who you Are. And therefore, you have lost the awareness that you have an inheritance and what the inheritance is. You're unconscious of it. And regaining consciousness of it is what this is all about. And it is what your heart yearns for and it is what makes you feel like a stranger in a strange land, which is like referring to a Son of God in an orphanage.

Continuing . . .

*You still have the power, but you have interposed so much between it and your AWARENESS of it that you cannot use it. Everything you have taught yourselves has made your power more and more obscure to you.*

The better you got at being an orphan, the more obscure your divine Sonship became to you.

*You know not WHAT it is nor WHERE. You have made a semblance of power and a show of strength so pitiful that it MUST fail you.*

I mean, after all, a Son of God pretending to be an orphan is a pitiful sight because it is such gross nonsense, such impossible nonsense.

*For power is not a seeming strength, and truth is beyond semblance of any kind. Yet all that stands between you and the power of God in you is but your learning of the false, and your attempts to undo the true.*

Now, as we're reading here, this description of you isn't very complimentary. And yes, it could be put in more complimentary terms. Let's say, it doesn't have to be so darkly and strongly put. But the fact is, that you have a great deal of faith and trust that you invest in your knowledge and in your practice of your knowledge, and in the ordering of your thoughts, and in living your life

according to the particular orderliness of your thinking. And you must come to a point where you find that not valuable at all.

And so, it is helpful not to speak too kindly about you and your bad habit of valuing your ability to think well and be powerful because of the order and the logic and the intelligence of your thinking. It's got to be put in a way that will cause you to stop in your tracks and say, "Wow! Maybe . . . maybe what I'm doing, even though it isn't actually accomplishing anything in the larger picture . . . is causing me to experience a serious loss of identity and a serious loss of peace that it's my Birthright to be experiencing, and a serious loss of my capacity to love and therefore, a serious loss of my mental balance." Shall I say sanity? Maybe it constitutes a serious loss of sanity—nothing uncorrectable, but something that won't be corrected if no one takes a look and says, "Wow, I may be doing something . . ." Well, let's put it this way, "I may be seriously fucking myself up!" Another strong word that isn't too strong at all.

Maybe you are seriously suffering from something you shouldn't be suffering from at all. No, not maybe . . . *actually*.

So, weather the storm with me and let these harsh descriptions of you register with you. Why? So that you might feel guilty and bad? No. But so you will seriously look at the fact that you may be doing some things that you seriously don't want to do and that you won't stop doing if somebody doesn't seriously confront you with it.

Now . . .

*Be willing, then, for all of it to be undone, . .*

All of what? Oh-h . . . all of the skill that you've personally developed? And all of the power that you have accrued?

*Be willing, then, for all of it to be undone and be glad that you are not bound to it forever. For you have taught yourselves how to imprison the Son of God, . .*

. . . yourself . . .

*. . . a lesson so unthinkable that only the insane, in deepest sleep, could even dream of it.*

Sure makes you sound like an idiot, doesn't it? But that's not the point. The point is, that you are involved in something that only those in the deepest sleep and insanity would be engaged in and you don't know it. And so somebody is having to tell you so that you can change your course—do

something new, stop dead in your tracks and abandon what you're doing, and at the least, move into the Silence, find a way to become still so that there is no static standing between you and the fullness of the Void in which Creation occurs, so that you're in a position of having It register with you and come back into your right Mind.

*Can God learn how NOT to be God? And can His Son, . .*

. . . you . . .

*. . . given all power by Him, learn to be powerless?*

It's unthinkable and insane, such a thought. But you're behaving as though you're powerless.

"Oh-h . . . ya know, I just don't know what my body's gonna do next." "Oh-h you know, I just don't know what my kids are gonna do next." "Oh-h you know, I just don't know what the economy is going to do next."

Poor powerless little you.

*What have you taught yourselves that you can possibly prefer to keep, in place of what you HAVE and what you ARE?*

Do you like being a little whiner about the economy and the family and the undependable body you have and so on? Do you want to keep that which you've taught yourself and which you rely on and depend on and have faith in?

*Atonement teaches you how to escape forever from everything that you have taught yourselves in the past by showing you only what you are NOW.*

Well, do you have to do anything to be shown what you are now? Yes. You have to stop asserting what you believe you are, which you do constantly everyday, whether you're by yourself and thinking or whether you're with others and communicating. You are always asserting yourself. When you think, you think according to the rules and standards that you value. And you interpret everything that you see according to these standards, these values that you have incorporated.

You're constantly reinforcing the you, you think you are. And you are therefore, never in the silence where the Movement of Creation is happening and in which, because of the silence, it can register with you as what it really is and what disclosed to you your function, which as I said, is to be that which is paying attention to Creation and letting it register with you for what it is, whether it looks like a barista fixing you a cup of coffee, or a box-boy loading

your groceries into your car, or you making love to your wife, or your wife loving you. No matter what it looks like, no matter how it might be interpreted—if interpretations are going to be employed—what is *really* going on, that's what you want to know. And that's what you will not know if you will not dare to become silent, if you will not abandon your insistence upon interpreting everything according to your values, by measuring it spontaneously according to your values, and coming to conclusions about it instead of just being with it and giving God a chance to show up.

*Learning HAS BEEN accomplished before its effects are manifest.*

You can't have the effects of learning until the learning has occurred. If you have the manifestation of it, the learning has already occurred.

*Learning is therefore in the past, but its influence determines the present by giving it whatever meaning it holds for you.*

How many of you looked forward to the day that you would graduate from High School, or looked forward to the day that you would graduate from college with your degree so that you might be finished learning and get on with the wonder and actuality of life?

Well, let me ask you something. Who told you that learning would ever cease, would ever come to an end? If learning stops, wonder disappears. And I'll tell you something—and if you all think about it you'll realize the truth of it—you don't want wonder to cease. You don't want to stop being surprised. When the only thing that will ever happen is something that you can expect, well, I believe that that would be called purgatory. It certainly wouldn't be life. And it is not the purpose or function of Being to be experienced that way.

And to the degree that you re-embrace your function of being that attention, that attentiveness, that is willing to embrace all that is happening, without inserting anything between you and it, you will forever be in a state of learning. And your learning will be manifest. Not because you have become a great manifester of things, but because in abiding in your function and experiencing the Movement of Creation, which is a learning movement, manifestation of the learning occurs.

Ah, you might say your power comes into play. But it is not a power, called force which you exert. It's a power that is the nature of the movement of conscious awareness. And when you're fulfilling your purpose, when you're being the Son of God by embodying the Movement of God—and as I said, God is constantly making a gift and never getting—then the joy of knowing who you Are, the wonder of being what you Are will re-emerge never to be lost

again. And that's the point. But you won't arrive at that until you're willing to accept the postulate, I'm going to say, that you *do not know*.

Again . . .

*Learning is therefore in the past, but its influence determines the present by giving it whatever meaning it holds for you.*

Yeah, I know you've had a rough experience with men. They've always treated you badly. And as a result you now approach all men with a negative attitude. Your past learning . . .

*. . . determines the present by giving it whatever meaning it holds for you.*

That's a key point.

*. . . whatever meaning it holds for you.*

Whatever biased or torqued perspective you lay upon life, life will have for you.

*YOUR learning gives the present no meaning at all.*

Now that's perhaps a little difficult to understand. The first sentence says:

*Learning is therefore in the past, but its influence determines the present by giving it whatever meaning it holds for you.*

And then it says:

*YOUR learning gives the present no meaning at all.*

Well, that's true. The present is the actual. The present is Creation enacted, you might say. It's actual. Now, your learning may cause your perception of it all to be torqued, twisted, having a mean-spirited edge to it that causes the present to reflect to you the same-old, same-old that has made you miserable forever. But the fact is, that the present is really Creation enacted and it hasn't been changed by your biased, mean-spirited attitude. So again . . .

*Learning is therefore in the past, . .*

*. . . meaning it always happens before the manifestation of it occurs in your life.*

*Learning is therefore in the past, but its influence determines the present by giving it whatever meaning it holds for you. YOUR learning gives the present no meaning at all.*

Meaning is God derived. Your learning doesn't constitute the eliciting of real meaning. It just causes you to have a biased perception of reality, of Creation. Okay.

*Nothing you have ever learned can help you understand the present, or teach you how to undo the past.*

Now, there's one exception to that. If you have learned in the past how to be so present in the moment that you choose not to do anything else, then your learning in the past will cause you to be so present in the moment, *now*, that you aren't bringing past learning with you. You see?

Again, though . . .

*Nothing you have ever learned can help you understand the present, . .*

The only thing that will help you understand the present is, that when you look with innocent eyes in the moment you're in, you can see God in it. That's the only way you can understand the present. You will have to be present with It, without preconceptions and without memory so that the meaning God is expressing as the present moment will register with you. And it will register with you if you're allowing yourself to fulfill your function, which is to simply be the attentiveness that allows the recognition of what's really going on.

"Well, you know what? You make me sound like some sort of a nerve ending. I'm just supposed to sit here and respond to the stimulus of the present. Well, I'll tell you something, I got more gumption than that, and I won't settle for such a boring activity. And I most certainly will not consider the possibility that that is my ultimate function. And I'll tell you something, I can throw a steer down in thirty seconds. And I can make my wife do anything just by raising my eyebrow. And I can put ten companies out of business in three days if I think it will make me money. I've got power. I've got more gumption than to just be some something that gives attention to what's really going on, and that's it."

Well, I tell you what, as long as you want to live in the orphanage I'll send you a postcard every now and then and I'll invite you to come to where I am. I'll even give you directions on how to get there. But hey, if you want to throw a steer, go throw a steer. But . . .

*Nothing you have ever learned can help you understand the present, or teach you how to undo the past. Your past IS what you have taught yourselves.*

Shall I yell this? In the book it's all in capital letters.

*LET IT ALL GO.*

You know what? Try just letting it go for a month. You know, give yourself the option to stop letting it go, but give yourself thirty days to actually let it all go.

*Do not attempt to understand any event, or anything, or anyone in its light, . .*

. . . the light of the past . . .

*. . . for the light of darkness by which you try to see can ONLY obscure.*

*Put no confidence at all in darkness . . .*

Now, it means here, do not put confidence at all in your memory, in you past, in the things you're already sure of, in your confidence that all men are what the few men have demonstrated to you that they are, and so on.

*Put no confidence at all in darkness to illuminate your understanding, for if you do you contradict the light, and thereby THINK you see the darkness. Yet darkness cannot BE seen, for it is nothing more than a condition in which seeing becomes impossible.*

What's another way of saying it? Darkness is nothing more than a condition in which paying attention becomes impossible, in which being attentive to what everything really is becomes impossible.

*You who have not yet brought all of the darkness you have taught yourselves unto the light in you . . .*

Get that?

*You who have not yet brought all of the darkness you have taught yourselves unto the light in you can hardly judge the truth and value of this course. Yet God did not abandon you.*

And I would say, the Holy Spirit, that which is nothing more than your right Mind has not abandoned you. And I have not abandoned you.

*And so you have another lesson sent from Him, . .*

. . . God . . .

*. . . ALREADY learned for every Child of light by Him to Whom God gave it.*

That's me, I have learned it for you. And there are others since me who have learned it and therefore have learned it for you. The ground has already been broken, you might say. You're not blazing the trail yourself. You're coming along a trail that is already marked. You've already been helped. God did not abandon you.

*And so you have another lesson sent from Him, ALREADY learned for every Child of light by Him to Whom God gave it. This lesson shines with God's glory, for in it lies His power, which He shares so gladly with His Son.*

The gift has already been made. The gift of your power has already been made, already given you. But as long as you are going to fight amongst your fellow orphans to get to the better rooms on the higher floors, and to get the nicer maintenance jobs, and to prove yourselves, you're not going to experience the gift that's been given to you. "Oh, no, I don't want anything so easy. I will fight for my good. I will earn my good. I will demonstrate for all to see how good I am. Don't make no gifts to me that I don't have to earn . . . it won't say anything about me at all . . . might get other people to think that they can have their good too without fighting for it. And then where would things be? C-r-a-z-y.

*Learn of His happiness, . .*

. . . God's happiness . . .

*. . . which is YOURS. But to accomplish this, all your dark lessons must be brought willingly to truth, and joyously laid down by hands open to receive, not closed to take.*

What is attentiveness? Attentiveness is a willing to let something register with you, you might say, it's a way of letting things in, not grabbing and pulling things in, not an assertive, proactive action. Attentiveness is a passive, allowing action which by virtue of its undefendedness simply can't help but be inundated by the Movement of Life, Creation Itself, God. And so when you give up the struggle and the fight to assert yourself, when your hand is not

tightly closed to grasp and take, but is passively open, you might say, everything can end up in your hands—everything will, because you're not resisting or denying anything by having a closed fist or, we'll say, a closed mind.

*You who have not yet brought all of the darkness you have taught yourselves unto the light in you can hardly judge the truth and value of this course. Yet God did not abandon you.*

Remember this. You who have been described so darkly and sinisterly and insanely as we've been reading tonight, remember, the light is in you.

*You who have not yet brought all of the darkness you have taught yourselves unto the light in you can hardly judge the truth and value of this course. Yet God did not abandon you.*

Remember that. Continuing where we left off earlier . . .

*Learn of His happiness, which is YOURS. But to accomplish this, all your dark lessons must be brought willingly to truth, and joyously laid down by hands open to receive, not closed to take. Every dark lesson that you bring to Him Who teaches light He will accept from you, because you do not want it.*

Now, again we have these sort of sinister words.

*Every dark lesson . . .*

Here's a dark lesson: "I'm a recognizably good person and I do recognizably good things, and people are blessed by what I do." Would you have thought that was a dark lesson? Well, let me ask you this, in the making of that statement did God fit in there anywhere in your mind?

"I'm a recognizably good person." Well . . . why? Because you have this habit and intention in every moment to listen to God's Voice so that you might know the divine truth about your brother and therefore everything you do is recognizably good?

Or, is it because you have this pattern of thoughts and ideas and behaviors that everyone mutually agrees are good and valuable and because you figured out how to manipulate circumstances and make them better for people, you are benefiting them, and that makes you a good person. See. . . that's a dark lesson. It's a lesson in darkness that you've taught yourself and it's a lesson in darkness because the light of truth doesn't dwell in it and therefore in you. And you are practicing something that you will have to abandon in the process of waking up—in the process of being willing to become attentive to what is

really going on—and to be the state of attentiveness rather than the doer of good works.

So, dark lessons aren't necessarily evidences of overt dishonesty or cruelty or abuse. But if you realize that your desire to behave independently in a way that makes good things happen and you want to teach that to others, you will have to realize that that keeps you and others unconscious of their divine Birthright, of their inheritance. And so you are keeping the truth from them, by keeping them preoccupied with those things that are ego-satisfying, but keep everyone unconscious of the truth. That's what makes them dark lessons, because you are keeping the truth in the dark where it can't be seen.

So, "dark lessons" aren't really that sinister. They don't necessarily have anything to do with mean-spiritedness or criminal activity. They have to do with teaching ignorance.

Now, if you don't know that you're suffering from ignorance, you can't do anything other than teach it. But you're learning here what ignorance is and so you're in a position to stop teaching it. You're in a position to recognize the many places in which you do practice it so that you might be in a position to stop, to correct yourself.

*Every dark lesson . . .*

. . . every ignorance that you have believed and forwarded to your friends.

*Every dark lesson that you bring to Him Who teaches light He will accept from you, because you do not want it.*

He won't take it from you if you still want it. But when you recognize it for what it is and you bring it to Him because you don't want it, He will take it.

*And He will gladly EXCHANGE each one for the bright lesson He has learned for you.*

Now, we started out the evening with the statement . . .

*. . . the essential thing is learning that YOU DO NOT KNOW.*

And we're going to end with this sentence.

*Never believe that any lesson you have learned APART from Him means anything.*

Two different ways of saying the same thing.

I hope you will be very attentive this week to what we've discussed this evening, because there is a lot in it and yet it is utter simplicity and it's the epitome of Love and it will help you learn what Love is, and help you have the guts to express it, embody it.

And I love you and I look forward to being with you next week.

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*A Course In Miracles (reference pages)*  
*New Section: THE TEST OF TRUTH*  
<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:31 <sup>2</sup> Sparkly Book – p.342 / JCIM – p.143 / CIMS – p. 287  
*First Edition – p. 275 / Second Edition – p. 296*

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