

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

January 22ND 2011

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

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

The End of Illusions . . . glory hallelujah!

Now, let's remember that we're reading from a chapter which we're at the end of, entitled *The Forgiveness of Illusions*. And so, before we continue on with this next section, let me ask: What does the word, "forgiveness" mean? What does the word, "illusions" mean?

I'll give you a moment to contemplate the answer based upon what we have been reading for quite a few weeks.

Illusions are misperceptions which you believe to be true perceptions. I'm going to refine that a bit to be more clearly precise: Illusions are perceptions which are believed to be knowledge. And even a more subtle adjustment: Illusions are perceptions which are believed to be Knowing . . . Knowing meaning the direct experience of truth itself, not an observation of truth from a distance, but a direct experience, I'm going to say, of the Mind of God in you experiencing what God Knows about each and every thing.

In that context, perceptions are misperceptions. Perceptions are observations of truth. Perceptions are observations of truth that you have come to conclusions about, that you have thought and reasoned about and about which you have created a definition and you believe your definition to be an accurate assessment of what you're observing.

Again, illusions are perceptions which you believe are Knowing—Knowledge.

Now how do you forgive illusions? What is forgiveness?

Forgiveness is the act of withdrawing your commitment to and belief in your *perceptions* or misperceptions.

Forgiveness is the act the shifting from your perceptions, your definitions—the meanings you have given everything. It's your abandonment of those and your shifting back to the Father's Perspective. "Father, what is the truth here? Holy Spirit, what is the truth here? What do I need to Know now?" You see?

Forgiveness is not some *wonderful gift you give to the unforgiven*—to those *awful ones* who truly have been unlike God and truly have been mean and damaging. Forgiveness isn't the wonderful beneficence of extending to them your willingness to overlook their awfulness and withdraw your judgment.

That's not forgiveness. That's holding that other one to the awful perception you have of them—the awful definition you have of them . . . and then you say, "But in spite of that, out of the fullness of my heart and out of my having been touched by the Holy Spirit, [sigh] I withdraw my judgment."

You have done nothing if you still see an unforgivable one there whom you have just happened to have enough of a spiritual experience to forgive.

Remember, an illusion is a perception believed to be Knowing—a misunderstanding believed to be a true experience.

How on earth can anyone else have anything to do with your act of forgiveness? How can anyone else have anything to do with your willingness to say, "Wait a minute here, I'm going to do the two-step. I'm going to abandon the thought I just had about that one. And I'm going to rejoin with my Father so that I might not have a private experience of this other one—a private perception of this other one—and I might join with my Father Who has placed in me His Mind because He has expressed in me all that He Is and I am His Son, I am His Daughter, I'm His Offspring just as my Brother is. So Father, what is the truth here?"

See, you're abandoning your definition of your Brother and you are withdrawing your investment of trust and faith and commitment in your own beliefs, so that you might join with the actual direct experience of the truth of your Brother from That which is the Source and the condition of your Brother—God.

So, what have we been basically reading about, talking about in this chapter, if it hasn't been the holy instant? That is how the forgiveness of illusions is

implemented. And you're clearer about this than you ever have been before as a result of what we've covered.

It's becoming clear that the act of the forgiveness of illusions is going to ultimately be the way you Be consciously forever. Right now you think it's just a technique—it is the way it has been presented, it is a means of getting out of illusion. But what it really is, is you re-embracing the natural action or activity of your Mind, of your Being.

And so you will find that indeed, you will forgive illusions and you will come to the end of the experience of illusions. But this act of joining won't then stop. It won't be a matter of it not being needed anymore, it will be that in the process of abandoning your illusions, you have come into the right use of your Mind and you will stay there *forever*.

One always learns from experience. And when one learns from experience, one doesn't make the same mistake again as a general rule, if the learning is complete. And I promise you when this learning is complete, you will not again say to one of your Brothers, "Just for the heck of it . . . just because we can do it, let's join together in a mutual agreement about something and give it a definition different from what our Father gave it—different from what our very Being gave it. Let's imagine another meaning and let's agree to it and let's exist in that mutual agreement between ourselves. And hey, we may be able to get a few others to join us in this interesting diversion from just being the Sons and Daughters of God." [Chuckles] Actually, those aren't the words that were used, but you get the idea.

So, going into the book, the new section is:

THE END OF ILLUSIONS

. . . and the first sentence says:

It is impossible to let the past go without relinquishing the special relationship.

[repeats] It is impossible to let the past go without relinquishing the special relationship.

Well, that's a reverse way of saying what the two-step is, isn't it. Because the two-step is a matter of letting yourself be so present *in* the present, that you are experiencing everything with innocent eyes. And in that space you don't find yourself experiencing a special relationship. You aren't finding yourself experiencing a hateful or mean-spirited relationship. You don't find yourself

experiencing a relationship in which leverage is called for to make you feel more valid. You see?

So the reverse of the two-step is to say:

It is impossible to let the past go without relinquishing the special relationship.

Think about it . . . or contemplate it. [chuckles]

When you're having a special relationship, you're having an interaction with something without your connection to your Father, without a conscious experience of the divine one that you Are, who is engaged in a relationship with someone else or something else. If you were aware of who you divinely Are while you were in relationship with someone or something else, you would immediately be aware of their holiness, their divinity . . . you see? . . . which would not constitute an unconsciousness of who your Brother is, or of who you Are and therefore, no special relationship would be experienced.

Therefore, all day long, every day when you're engaged with your fellowman, whether it's family or strangers or co-workers, whatever, when you're engaged with them and there's no awareness of your holiness or your connection with God at the moment that you are involved with your Brother and Sister, then where are you? Are you in the present? Are you in the now? Are you in the only place where the holy instant is? No.

If you aren't, then you are involved with everyone from your memory. That means you're involved with them from the past. Your perceptions of them are based upon what's happened with them before.

The *only way* you can have an experience of their innocence from anything that happened before, is to be looking at them with the Father. It's that black and white. But that makes it that simple, because all you have to do is abandon that simple misperception by forgiving it. And you forgive it by engaging in the two-step: Hesitating, silencing yourself and in the silence, saying, "Father . . ." which of course means reminding yourself of who you Are, the Son or Daughter of Something, ". . . what is the truth about my Brother? What is the truth about this?"

And so you break the isolation—the autonomy. And you invite the direct experience of the Father's Perspective about your Brother as well as You. Because once you see it about yourself or your Brother, you see it about the other. Once you see it about yourself, you see it about your Brother. Once you see it about your Brother, you immediately experience the fact that your Knowing is the truth about you as well.

So, remember that. You might just want to jot a little note down and put it on your refrigerator that embodies the idea that, if you're engaged with a Brother or with anything in the world and at the moment that you're involved with them, you are not consciously activating, you might say, your connection with your Father for the purpose of having His Perspective available to you, then everything that is going on in that interaction with your Brother is arising out of memory—is the context of the involvement is memory, is past. It's that simple.

And so . . .

It is impossible to let the past go without relinquishing the special relationship.

They are simultaneous and they are the same act. Relinquishing the special relationship is relinquishing the past.

For the special relationship is an attempt to RE-ENACT the past and CHANGE it.

Oh, you have a grievance . . . a very righteous grievance. And anybody you tell will agree with you that you are right. And that justice is due you and so you must go back and bring forward, you might say, into the present with your Brother whom you have a grievance with, the issue . . . and then attempt to extract whatever will satisfy your need for justice.

That is called the human condition. That is called what you're wanting to Wake up from. If that is not the fundamental reason you're studying the *Course*, then let it become the fundamental reason for studying it. I'll bet you thought I was going to say, if that isn't your fundamental reason for reading it, then throw the book away. No. If that isn't the fundamental reason for reading it, then let it become your fundamental reason for reading it.

Imagined slights, remembered pain, past disappointments, perceived injustices and deprivations . . .

. . . perceived . . . catch the word there . . .

. . . all enter into the special relationship, which becomes a way in which you seek to restore your wounded self-esteem.

And what satisfaction everyone gets who engages in this, it's about the only real hit of satisfaction you can get as an orphan—as someone who doesn't know his Father or Mother, his Source, and therefore, doesn't know the Source of his Brother or Sister or world.

*What basis would you have for choosing a special partner
WITHOUT the past?*

Well, you could say, “Well, I could want to have a relationship with my Brother that doesn’t involve the past just so that we could have fun! We can go to the movie, we can go to Disneyland, we can go out and have dinner, we can enjoy life together!”

Wait a minute . . . where did I hear, “Oh, well, we could get together and go out and see a movie or engage in fine dining while experiencing it all through the Father’s eyes, and do it without any aspect of the experience falling outside of the call or the need to experience it as God is Being it.”

In other words, where was there in that expression any indication that there was going to be an intent to experience the holiness of you and your friends, who were going to engage in a relationship minus the past, and everything that you were going to be enjoying? Nowhere. And if that isn’t in there, then I promise you, you’re not having a direct experience of Reality. All of It, no matter how good it is, is occurring within the context of memory. It is therefore, in the context of the past and you are hampered by, you are limited by this ignorance of Reality.

And it’s not your Birthright. And no matter how good it is, no matter how long it might seem to remain good, it will turn sour because sooner or later, your innate sanity—the Holy Spirit in you—is going to get your attention and is going to say “Hey, you are suffering from illusion. You are believing that your perceptions are Knowing, you are believing that your perceptions of it all are Knowledge—the Father’s Perspective. You see?”

*What basis would you have for choosing a special partner
WITHOUT the past?*

Well there wouldn’t be any.

*Every such choice is made because of something "evil" in the
past, to which you cling, and for which must someone else
atone.*

Oh boy, the getting of justice is . . . oh-h, it’s a precious activity full of meaning, full of the promise of satisfaction.

The special relationship TAKES VENGEANCE on the past.

But you know what? It looks like someone taking vengeance on someone in the present.

Now, . . .

By seeking to remove suffering in the past, it OVERLOOKS the present . . .

. . . hey, if you are not in the present by virtue of being connected with your Father and in that joining experiencing His Perspective, then you're not in the present. You are in the past. When that happens, red lights should go on—flashing red lights should go on: You're not in touch with Reality! And that should be disturbing. It shouldn't be that which encourages you to be with even more vigor and to accomplish more things while still being unconscious in the hope that that fervor and activated commitment will make you more real. You see? It is insane.

No special relationship is experienced in the present.

Now, why say this over and over? “No special relationship is experienced in the present . . . no special relationship is experienced in the present . . . oh, no special relationship is experienced in the present!”

“What good does it say, what good does it do to reiterate that? Quit putting it in my face!”

I'm sorry . . . it needs to be put in your face. And it's not an unkindness and it's not an affront to you. It's a reminder of something that you've forgotten—all of you have forgotten it.

NO special relationship is experienced in the present.

That's not a statement of what's wrong with you. That's a statement that illuminates what will allow for the correction. If no special relationship is experienced in the present, *then* it means that all you have to do is bring your attention into the present with the willingness to abandon the past and you will be out of the special relationship. You see, it has to be said so that you know that not doing that or doing the opposite—by being in the present—will undo a special relationship. You need to know that. That's the answer—not a problem shoved in your face. You see?

Shades of the past envelop it, and make it what it is. It HAS no meaning in the present, and if it means nothing NOW, it cannot have any real meaning at all.

Oh, but it does have real meaning. Well, let me suggest this: Genuinely . . . genuinely bring yourself into the present and genuinely with no artifice, ask to know the truth, ask to know the God's honest truth, ask to be filled with the

conscious awareness of what is Real, and you will find that everything you thought was real—that was so worthy of being fought for—has actually vanished from your mind. It's not even left there to do anything with, because in the influx of the truth is the influx of your ever present capacity to directly experience Reality—what God is being as Knowing, as Knowledge. And you will find yourself feeling love for that which is absolutely loveable, because there is nothing unlike God where you were seeing your Brother. And there's nothing unlike God present in you as your experience as you're engaging in this. So test it genuinely.

How can you change the past EXCEPT in fantasy?

After all, it's always the present isn't it?

*And who can give you what you think the past deprived you of?
The past is nothing.*

That's because the present is All. The present is eternity and infinity unseparated from each other. Omnipresence is what it Is . . . the present, the now. That's why the holy instant is the threshold from perception to Knowledge, from perception to Knowing.

The past is nothing. Do not seek to lay the blame for deprivation on it, for the past is gone. You cannot really NOT let go what has ALREADY gone. It must be, therefore, that you are maintaining the illusion that it has NOT gone because you think it serves some purpose that you want FULFILLED.

Not the least of which is obtaining justice. And not the least of which is your need to be able to coerce your orphan brother or sister to confirming your validity so that you might overcome the invalidity that is natural and unavoidable in orphanhood.

So again, . .

It must be, therefore, that you are maintaining the illusion that it has NOT gone because you think it serves some purpose that you want FULFILLED. And it must also be that this purpose could NOT be fulfilled in the present, but ONLY in the past.

The ego mindset will *never* direct your attention to the present as though that's where the solution might be. It needs your attention in the past, where your divinity and holiness *cannot* register with you. It's that simple.

Do not underestimate the intensity of the ego's drive for vengeance on the past. It is completely savage and completely insane.

Just pay attention to what jealousy has done to each of you at different times . . . maybe not often, but when it has gotten hold of you just watch what it has done—and what it has done to you.

It is completely savage and completely insane. For the ego remembers everything that you have done which offended it, and seeks retribution of YOU.

Mind you, the very fact that the orphan mindset or the ego mindset never directs your attention where you can learn the truth, is all the proof you need that its intent is destructive and is ultimately to destroy you. What does that mean? To destroy any capacity you might have to remember you are the Son and Daughter of God, because that simple truth is your release. From what? From illusion.

We're learning about the forgiveness of illusion and we're now giving our attention to the end of illusions.

The fantasies it brings . . .

. . . the ego . . .

The fantasies it brings to the special relationships it chooses in which to act out its hate are fantasies of YOUR destruction.

Well, when you're engaged in attaining justice and getting even, you're not aware that anything that's going on is destructive to you. But those of you who have followed this insane attempt to prove your worth at the expense of another has not only kept you from remembering who you Are and providing you the place to go to—meaning the holy instant—that would release you from the dream, from the illusions, it has destroyed what you would call your human life, your human experience.

For the ego holds the past AGAINST you, and in your ESCAPE from the past, . .

. . . which happens when you practice the holy instant . . .

. . . it sees itself deprived of the vengeance it believes that you so justly merit.

[Chuckles] It sucks you in. You deserve justice . . . you deserve justice: Go for it... go for it... faster... faster... good... good... go for it... go for it... faster... faster... good... good . . . it goads you on.

Yet without your alliance in your own destruction, the ego could not hold you to the past.

In the special relationship, you are ALLOWING your destruction to be.

Some of you who are engaging in it now, don't see this. Many of you who have done it, know the profound truth of what I'm saying. And those who know the profound truth of it would say to those of you who think there's still validity and reason and intelligence in seeking justice and revenge . . . they would say to you, "Stop dead in your tracks. You don't have to learn the hard way. You don't have to end up in the gutter. You don't have to end up down on your hands and knees in your one hundred or five hundred thousand dollar home praying for release from your obsession"—the obsession that is causing everything to collapse around you because you're not able to be present enough and attentive enough to the present to respond to the present intelligently.

Hell . . . Heaven . . . whatever . . . take the time to hesitate, take the time to stop dead in your tracks, or alive in your tracks before you are dead, and say, "Father, what is the truth here? Father, I want to experience my Brother the way You are experiencing Him because I no longer wish to be deluded. It's important to me not to be deluded any longer. I insist on not being deluded while at the same time being happy with the way things are. I am no longer satisfied with that kind of a split experience—that kind of an insane experience." Isn't that the first part of the two-step? I believe it is.

Again:

In the special relationship, you are ALLOWING your destruction to be. That this is insane is obvious. But what is less obvious to you is that the PRESENT is useless to you while you pursue the ego's goal as its ally.

And I promise you, if the present is useless to you, then your salvation is unavailable to you, your Awakening is impossible to you.

The past is gone; seek not to preserve it in the special relationship which binds you to it, and would teach you that salvation is past, and that you must return TO the past to find salvation.

[In a very graspy voice] Justice . . . yes, justice.

There is no fantasy which does not contain the dream of retribution for the past.

You see? We go on and on and on talking about how bad things are—that things aren't good. Yeah, that's right.

The past is gone; seek not to preserve it in the special relationship which binds you to it, and would teach you that salvation is past, and that you must return TO the past to find salvation.

You see? Well, if that's not where salvation is, where is it? Fortunately that's included here as well. You haven't just been told what the mess is, you're also provided the solution. The solution is: The present. And you know what? It's always available. You can't run out of it. All the rest . . . everyone else can't get it all and you be left without it. [chuckling] There's plenty of it. It's abundant. It's ever-present. And as I said, it's Omnipresent.

So you have the answer. Abandon your grievances. How? Not through some wonderful spiritual act of beneficence where you let the bastard off the hook even though he's still a bastard. You see? Where is the forgiveness in that? But that is what most everyone thinks it is.

There is no fantasy which does not contain the dream of retribution for the past.

Here's the question:

Would you act out the dream, or let it go?

Hey, this question is the simple threshold of Awakening. You don't need to read anything else in this book. Answer the question by your action.

Would you act out the dream, or let it go?

I need to keep reminding you in spite of all the rather technical, psychological stuff we read, that it's this simple, it's as simple as what is embodied in this one sentence.

Would you act out the dream, or let it go?

In the special relationship, it does not SEEM to be an acting out of vengeance which you seek. And even when the hatred and the savagery break briefly through into awareness, . .

... your awareness ...

... the illusion of love is not profoundly shaken.

The illusion of love that keeps the special relationship in tact. The fact that ...

... even when the hatred and the savagery break briefly through into awareness, ..

... it isn't enough to trigger an awareness in you that there must be another way of looking at this, that there must be another way of being.

Yet the one thing which the ego never allows to reach awareness is that the special relationship is the acting out of vengeance ...

... what? Here it is ...

... on YOURSELF.

You are always the brunt of the vengeance you bring to bear on a Brother or a Sister out of great self-righteousness.

Listen to it again:

Yet the one thing which the ego never allows to reach awareness is that the special relationship is the acting out of vengeance on YOURSELF.

Hey, maybe you haven't all experienced an overt engagement in being vengeful and almost totally ruining your life, but almost all of you have had an experience of knowing someone who has. Learn from your simple observation. Because the moment you have an inkling of a real grounding awareness that your practice of vengeance is destroying you, you will stop, because you will not knowingly engage in acts of self-destruction—even though you are the Son of God and you cannot ever stop being the Son of God and you can never actually die—you will stop doing what causes you to feel like you're dying and to go through experiences of excruciating pain and sorrow and guilt that are not the Birthright of the Sons or Daughters of God.

Again:

Yet the one thing which the ego never allows to reach awareness is that the special relationship is the acting out of vengeance on YOURSELF. But what else COULD it be? In seeking

the special relationship, you look not for glory in YOURSELF. You have denied that it is THERE, . .

. . . you poor little orphan that you are.

You have denied that it is THERE, and the relationship . . .

. . . the special relationship . . .

. . . becomes your SUBSTITUTE . . .

. . . becomes your substitute . . .

. . . for it.

Again:

In seeking the special relationship, you look not for glory in YOURSELF. You have denied that it is THERE, and the relationship becomes your SUBSTITUTE for it. And vengeance becomes your substitute for Atonement, and the ESCAPE from vengeance becomes your LOSS.

Why? Because you cannot, in the heat of the vengeance, remember that there's such a thing as a two-step or a holy instant, or a Birthright that is yours, that everything that you're engaging in is denying. It's that simple.

. . . vengeance becomes your substitute for Atonement, and the ESCAPE from vengeance . . .

. . . the Waking up through the holy instant . . .

. . . becomes your LOSS.

All of this goes on in the context of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which all that is going on is God being All there Is, in which everything that exists partakes of the nature and character and Being of God. But when you're caught up in the orphan mindset, when you're caught up in the vengeance, when you're caught up in the justice, you forget it—you lose grasp of that awareness. But because it's the ever-present truth, we can say, as it says here in the *Course*:

Against the ego's insane notion of salvation the Holy Spirit gently lays the holy instant.

Against all this wild, frenetic, compulsive, obsessive reaching for validity by extracting justice and getting others to validate your worth . . . against that wildness, chaotic activity . . .

. . . the ego's insane notion of salvation the Holy Spirit gently lays the holy instant.

It's right there gently present with each one of you to let yourself into, to relax into, as you would relax into your Father's Arms and let your misperception be lifted from you, let your perception be gently replaced with Knowing—meaning the Father's Perspective in you, as yours.

I love you all. You are blessed with the truth. You are blessed by what you were before you ever heard me speak. You are blessed by what you will be blessed by when you no longer need to hear me say these things. And you are blessed by a Brotherhood and a Sisterhood that you are part of, although, not consciously at this moment, but that in Awakening you will become conscious of. You do not have to stay bound.

Okay.

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