

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

July 30th 2011

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

Well, we've been talking about some rather serious things. Serious because well, it brings you to a point of having to do something you may not have thought you were going to have to do. And that is, as we have talked about, *change . . . grow . . .* become different *willingly*, not willfully, but willingly with approval from your heart.

To enter into the holy instant, to experience the influx of the awareness of truth from the Father or the Holy Spirit that happens in the holy instant—because that is the function of the holy instant—brings you spontaneously to a point that feels unfamiliar to you. It's new. It calls for you to notice in your Brother or your Sister—your fellowman—value that you hadn't been seeing and which you actually have no justification for, even though you're experiencing it.

You find yourself filled with inspiration to see things new. You're inspired to let your mind be made new. And there you are, having this new perspective that's very clear to you even though it had been absolutely obscure to you before.

Now, when you and your partner or a friend or someone you know who's willing to indulge in the holy instant for the express purpose of being infilled with the Father's Perspective so that you might see each other with eyes—I'm going to say, biased by God—biased by the Father's Perspective rather than your own personal perspective, you embark upon the holy relationship . . . you embark upon a holy relationship. And this is the first step Home. This is the first step back into your sanity.

But here's where the problem arises: When you do this, you find no justification for employing the old habits of relating to each other. But the habits don't disappear. All it takes is one unexpected event or remark or movement or look . . . and boom! . . . you're right back into traditional, habitual, manipulative means of controlling each other so that you can feel your balance.

And here's the other part of the difficulty: You feel that these responses—these conditioned responses—are not only justified, they are valid. And they are favorites. They are things you have attachments to. They are behaviors that tell you that you are sane, that you are grounded, that you are respectable, that you are worthwhile . . . real.

And so these are things you don't want to let go of. To let go of these things will mean that you will have to become—at least you believe you will have to become—ungrounded, unstable. And so it's very hard to let go of these habits. It's very hard to let go of the *way* the two of you have behaved before.

And so it takes real discipline not to lose the ground gained by virtue of practicing the two-step, engaging in the holy instant, having the influx of inspiration that allows you to experience your relationship in a new way, that we're identifying as a holy relationship. You don't want to lose the ground you've gained there because, as I've said, that's the first step back Home—that's the beginning of coming Home. And you do not want to have that movement—that goal—thwarted. And you especially don't want to have it thwarted by something as correctable as old habits.

But it does require persistence. That's what makes it difficult. That's what makes all of this serious because you have to engage in it *seriously* with determination.

It doesn't mean you have to lose your joy. But you might have thought that engaging in the two-step and the holy instant, and the beginning of an experience of a holy relationship, that all of your blocks to the experience of love and the expression of love would just melt and that there would be a natural, spontaneous harmony to the Movement.

And so, when you find yourself up against the persistence of your old habits, you discover that there's some work, there's some effort that you're going to have to put forth. You are going to have to once again engage in *learning*, learning something unfamiliar . . . learning it so completely by persistence that it becomes familiar. And you might say, becomes the new habit. I say that cautiously because habits, as you employ them and create them, are the effect of specific conscious or specific consciously directed ideas, the practice

of which have a goal to be accomplished. And the goal is something you made up when you weren't joined with your Father.

The new habit that we're talking about is one of persistently bringing yourself back to the point where you are *yielding* to the Father . . . continually bringing yourself back to the place where you say, "Father what is the truth here?" and then listening without interposing any of your own *fine* ideas. You see?

So the habit is the practice of no-habit. It's a practice that you will eventually shift into and it will just be called, "being Awake."

Now, going into the book and reading . . . oh, the last couple of sentences that we finished up with last week:

The goal IS set.

In other words, the holy relationship is what you've chosen for.

And your relationship has sanity as its purpose. For now you find yourselves in an insane relationship, RECOGNIZED as such in the light of its goal.

In other words, you're in this rather strange position of recognizing that you're not in your right Mind and recognizing it while you're not in it. It's like the clarity of knowing that you are engaging in nonsense while you're still engaging in it. It's like becoming aware while you're having a dream, that you're having a dream.

That is the beginning of Waking up.

So . . .

. . . now you find yourselves in an insane relationship, RECOGNIZED as such in the light of its goal.

And you feel the weirdness of it and . . .

Now the ego . . .

. . . the orphan mindset, the mindset of the one who thinks he's an independent agent . . .

Now the ego counsels thus; substitute for this ANOTHER relationship to which your former goal was quite appropriate.

In other words, the going gets a little bit tough. It's requiring a little bit of discipline. And the ego says—the old way of thinking says—“Hey . . . hey, it doesn't have to be this hard. You've been doing well enough your whole life. You know, things haven't gone to pot. Things aren't going to pot right now. You don't have to do this. You know, maybe your partner wants to have this 'holy relationship shit' . . . but you don't have to. You don't have to work this hard because there's somebody that will be happy with you *just as you are*. Let this one go find someone else to have a holy relationship with.”

This idea comes to you because you get frustrated at the lack of fulfillment that you were getting from your old ego relationship because it's not working really well since you've made this new commitment. And yet after having made this new commitment, you're not really comfortable yet, there. So, it's like six, to one-half dozen of the other. You see?

Yeah, you don't have to put up with this shit. You don't have to be frustrated all the time. You don't have to put up with her or him reminding you of what's revealed in the holy instant about the relationship, when you would rather be employing some of your old habits of manipulation so that you might get a little hit of self-respect based upon being unjoined. You see?

It is a very frustrating experience. It feels ungrounded. It feels unsatisfying and so, you know, the old habit kicks in . . . “you don't have to do this, go find someone who will like you just as you are.”

You can escape from your distress only by getting rid of each other.

What's the distress? The distress is the lack of recognized fulfillment arising out of the new goal and the practice of staying in the holy instant so that the growth might occur . . . so that the change might happen and so that the unfamiliar can become familiar.

Now, the ego's sneaky.

You need not part entirely if you choose not to do so. But you must exclude major areas of fantasy from each other, to save your sanity.

Now what is the ego saying? What are the major areas of fantasy that you must exclude from each other? Why it's the awareness of your holiness, your awareness of your partner's holiness. You must abandon the *fantasies* that the Holy Spirit has provided you—those crazy nonsensical ideas of unity and harmony and love and peace and wholeness, and that you're actually the Sons and Daughters of God and not independent agents at all. These are the

fantasies that the ego says you can withhold from each other and still stay together and not have to lose your familiar and satisfying relationship. You see? And you must do this to save your sanity, which means to remain stuck in your ignorance that you're comfortable with. And because you're comfortable with it, it must mean that you are, in most respects, sane . . . right? Obviously, if you're insane you'll be uncomfortable. If you're sane, you'll be comfortable. So:

. . . you must exclude major areas of fantasy from each other, to save your sanity.

Now, it says:

Hear not this now!

In other words, be alert. And when these thoughts present themselves to you, don't accept them. Recognize them as distractions from your goal to Wake up, from your goal of recognizing the holiness of yourself and your Brother or Sister and operating on that basis.

Have faith in Him . . .

. . . the Holy Spirit . . .

Who answered you. He heard. Has He not been very explicit in His answer? You are not now wholly insane. Can you DENY that He has given you a most explicit statement?

You see when you do this, when you engage in the holy instant and when the Father or the Holy Spirit responds to you with the truth, the response is very clear. It could be called *an explicit statement*. It could be called *an explicit understanding* that is so clear that the words that identify it are inescapable. And so the experience constitutes a statement, a statement of such meaning that your being able to see your Brother and everything in a new light, somehow spontaneously and not as a result of learning...learning...learning, like memorization: two-times-two is four, two-times-three is six, two-times-four is eight and on and on over and over so that you get it into the system.

But no, you're having this experience without going through a rehearsal, without going through steps. It's because you didn't acquire this clarity through a conscious process of memorization or of storing data so that you could say that you have learned, that you could seem to lose it easily or you can be easily distracted from it by your old habits.

Continuing . . .

Now He asks for faith a little longer, even in bewilderment.

Even though you're unsure, even though things feel unstable to you because it's not being easy to employ your old habits of control, have faith. You don't have to be clear in order to have faith. In fact when things are clear, you don't think you need faith. It's when you are bewildered that you need faith and because you have embarked on a very specific process of Awakening—of coming back into your right Mind—you must be diligent. It's that simple. Even if it's inconvenient to you, you must persist.

This is why what we're talking about seems to be serious. Because there's not a lot of joy to it, there's not a lot of buoyancy to it, there's not a wave that picks you up and deposits you in the Promised Land. There's a movement of inspiration that infills you and uncovers old bad habits as *bad habits*, so that you can see they're not working for you really, so that you can more easily let go of them . . . and so that you actually do go ahead and let go of them. In other words, you learn . . . you change . . . you grow.

Again, this *Course In Miracles* is not a head-trip, it's not a mental learning process. It's a movement of growth in which you will experience yourself being changed by virtue of the inspiration that is provided to you and by virtue of your letting it in and behaving in harmony with it, instead of persisting in rehearsing and rehearsing and rehearsing all of your old mindsets, theories and so on.

Now He asks for faith a little longer, even in bewilderment. For this will go, . .

. . . the bewilderment will go . . .

. . . and you will see the justification for your faith emerge, to bring you shining conviction. Abandon Him . . .

. . . the Holy Spirit, the One you've turned to, and the One Who has responded and the One Who stands with you . . .

. . . Abandon Him not now, nor each other.

Even though there are moments you could just easily walk away from him or easily walk away from her because nothing's going right between you anymore. The old things you used to do that seems to make things right aren't making things right anymore and you can't stick with the new things long enough for them to set into place and prove to you, convince you that indeed you are grounded and you are safe. You see?

This relationship HAS BEEN reborn as holy.

Again, *it's not going to feel like it.* It will, momentarily here and there, but mostly it's going to feel like a demand for hard work, a demand for discipline that you hadn't expected. And that somehow, your ego says, "I ought to tell you that what you're embarking on here is itself insane and that you are leaving sanity behind by abandoning your old habits."

Know this so that you can bring the determination and the commitment to this unsteady place and hold to it as you move through it and things stabilize.

Accept with gladness what you do not understand, and let it be explained to you as you perceive its purpose work in it to MAKE it holy.

In other words, it's going to be like planting a seed. And you keep looking, you water and you look . . . and you water and you look . . . and nothing. And you water and you look . . . and you water and you look . . . and a week goes by. And you water and you look . . . and nothing happens. Well, what do you do? You say, "Hey I could be doing the things I used to be doing when I wasn't watering and watching. I was pretty happy doing the other things. This is for the birds!"

No. If you've planted seeds before, you don't have this indecision and deterrent presenting itself to you. You know that you water and you look . . . and you water and you look. You even realize that you can water and not look . . . and water and not look . . . and water and not look . . . and the crop will come up. You see? So:

You will find many opportunities to blame each other for the "failure" of your relationship, for it will seem, at times, to have NO purpose.

Now, that isn't fleshed out very much . . .

. . . it will seem, at times, to have NO purpose.

Well, okay. But here is some practical aspects of it: The relationship will seem to have no purpose because none of the things you used to do that worked, will work. It's that simple. It will seem to have no purpose because nothing can be accomplished. You may try to slip back into your old habits and manipulations but your partner in this is liable to see you doing it and call you on it, and not be manipulated by it like he or she used to. So you're stuck. You're stuck with the "failure" of the old ways of being together. Whew!

And you know what? It makes you mad. It frustrates you. And of course, when you're mad and frustrated you're not in the holy instant, are you?

You're not anywhere near that place where, in the quietness and the desire to know, "What's the more of what God is being here than what I'm seeing?" Well, you're trapped. You're just simply trapped.

If you can't get into that place where the holy instant can be experienced, because it's so damn justifiable to you to be upset because nothing is working, then you have been successfully distracted from the holy purpose that the two of you have put into place regarding your relationship. And there's no way for you to be clear. There's no way for there to be a refreshment of the influx of inspiration.

A sense of aimlessness will come to haunt you, and to remind you of all the ways you once sought for satisfaction, and thought you found it.

A lot of reverie will go on. Yeah, that used to work and this used to work. She or he fell for it every time. It always worked. It becomes a despairing situation.

A sense of aimlessness will come to haunt you, and to remind you of all the ways you once sought for satisfaction, and thought you found it. Forget not now the misery you REALLY found, and do not now breathe life into your failing egos. For your relationship has NOT been disrupted. It has been SAVED.

You see? When it says:

Forget not now the misery you REALLY found, . .

. . . it's like saying: Don't forget that there was a moment where you realized that you were insane, that everything you thought had been normal all your life was not normal according to God's terms. And it didn't really bring you satisfaction or wholeness because sin, disease and death are still operating . . . are still governing. You knuckle down to them. It doesn't seem that they knuckle down to you. And yet that's the correction that's called for. So:

Forget not now the misery you REALLY [thought you] found, and do not now breathe life into your failing egos.

You know . . . [chuckles]. Oh, there's such a temptation to give artificial respiration and do everything you can to arouse the old way things worked. And then because you can't do it, you have to deal with the ongoing frustration.

Key point: As a result of practicing the holy instant and moving into the holy relationship . . .

. . . [For] your relationship has NOT been disrupted. It has been SAVED.

Now, here's why everything seems upside-down, unstable, messed-up.

You are very new in the ways of salvation, and think you have lost your way. YOUR way . . .

. . . the one you have been employing . . .

. . . IS lost, but think not this is LOSS. In your newness, remember that you have started again, . .

. . . Key point:

. . . TOGETHER.

You're simply starting together in a new way that neither one of you is totally familiar with, perhaps not even *very* familiar with. If you stay in the holy instant, if you do not abandon it, if you begin to re-employ your best judgments and your thinking, you will become confused again. But all you have to do is: [snaps fingers] Stop . . . do the two-step, become still, ask "What is the truth here?" You see? And then listen. Be willing to hear, so that the holy instant is refreshed, in the sense of re-opened in the moment you're in. It's not a rehash of the previous holy instant. It's a matter of being in the innocent state of mind which is unobstructedly available to the inspiration that it is the Father's good pleasure to give to you, to reveal to you the truth, so that you might respond to it—your partner, your world—as the holy Son or Daughter of God and the Kingdom of Heaven that It is.

In your newness, . .

. . . where you're faltering some . . .

. . . remember that you have started again, TOGETHER. And take each other's hand, to walk together along a road far more familiar than you now believe.

See? You need to know these things so that it gives you the courage to persist.

. . . walk together along a road far more familiar than you now believe. Is it not certain that you will remember a goal unchanged throughout eternity?

I mentioned before that you were Awake before you went to sleep. So in your Waking up you are returning to a state that you abandoned at an earlier time, one that you are already entirely familiar with but which you are ignorant of because you have so conscientiously *blocked it* by your insistence upon trying to become an independent agent, whole and real in your own right, without your Source, without your Father.

Is it not certain that you will remember a goal unchanged throughout eternity? For you have chosen but the goal of God, from which your true intent was NEVER absent.

The shifting from the experience you're having right now, to the experience just described, is worth every ounce of effort, persistence, determination and labor that it takes to arrive at the end of the road, at the end of the Movement, at the end of the shift.

Throughout the Sonship is the song of freedom heard, in joyous echo of your choice.

So, another helpful hint: You're not doing this all by yourself. It might seem that when you are faced with your partner and your partner is faced with you, that it's just two little forlorn egos who are somehow insane and didn't know they were, but now know they are and are in the unenviable position of having to move through their confidence that they are insane when they're not. And they're having to stick to it as they move past whatever their current sense of insanity is so that they might find, like a gentle fog blowing in, a vague but increasing experience of sanity, of well-being, of holiness that increases, not because of anything you've consciously chosen to do, other than to stay where it can happen. You see?

The only thing you can do through an act of will is to choose to stay where the shift is *happening*. You just can't be responsible for it happening. And you can't be responsible for the *content* of what is emerging. But *you can and you must be* responsible for remaining in the place where it can happen.

Where is that place? That place is in the holy instant. That place is in the silence in the middle of you, where all there is present is your attention—your eager attention—your desire to know what you don't know yet. And to hell with everything you do know!

You know, even if some of what you know is true and real, you can dare in the holy instant *to throw it all out*, because that of it which is Real will be reintroduced by the Holy Spirit as you're listening. You simply need to be in that place where you're totally incompetent, you're totally unable to appropriately act. And so you're willing to listen to be infilled with the motive

for acts that brings forth acts that identify Reality, that identify your wholeness, that identify your Brothers' and Sisters' wholeness. You see?

You have joined with many in the holy instant, and they have joined with you.

I know the holy instant seems like an emptiness to you. It seems like the quietness, the void. But it's full. It's full of the Presence of God. It's full of the Presence of Reality and the conscious experience of It that it's yours to be experiencing. So when you bring yourself to the holy instant, you're bringing yourself to a place that is *full*, full of your Reality, full of your comprehension of your Reality, full of all the Brotherhood, full of all of Creation. This is why coming to It is you returning to your right Mind. That's what it means.

You have joined with many in the holy instant, and they have joined with you. Think not your choice will leave you comfortless, for God Himself has blessed your holy relationship.

But see here's the rub: You're going to *feel* like doing this constitutes leaving your comfort. So when it says here:

Think not your choice will leave you comfortless, . .

You're going to say, "Wait a minute, my experience is the opposite of this. I'm not feeling comfortable." Well, in the end your choice will not leave you comfortless, because it will bring you to the immortal and eternal comfort of your Being, in which you are perfectly safe, perfectly at peace because there's no conflict in God, there's not conflict in Reality, there's no conflict in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Think not your choice will leave you comfortless, for God Himself has blessed your holy relationship.

How has God blessed your holy relationship? By revealing to you its holiness in a way that you can't deny, even though you can't explain how it is you're seeing its holiness. You see?

Join in His blessing, and withhold not yours upon it. For all it needs now is your blessing, that you may see that in it rests salvation.

Your Brother is your salvation. Your joining with your Brother in the holy relationship is your only means of escape from the insanity you're suffering from . . . from the sin, disease and death that you're suffering from and governed by.

[For] all it needs now is your blessing, that you may see that in it rests salvation. Condemn salvation not, . .

. . . even though its means is unfamiliar with you and makes you feel awkward.

Condemn salvation not, for it HAS come to you. And welcome it together, . .

. . . you and your partner . . .

. . . for it has come to JOIN you together in a relationship in which all the Sonship is together blessed.

I'm hoping that over the past weeks it has become easier for everyone to listen to the hard truth, to be confronted with the hard stuff. I hope that it's not frightening, like it might have been in the beginning, where you would have chosen to go somewhere else and do something else a little more pleasant. Because to understand what it is that has entrapped you and the fact that abandoning your devotion to it is the means of Waking up, is the means of experiencing salvation.

You undertook, together, to invite the Holy Spirit into your relationship. He could not have entered otherwise. Although you may have made many mistakes since then, you have also made enormous efforts to help Him do His work.

To help who? The Holy Spirit. To help who? That which is nothing more than your right Mind. Helping Him to do His work. What is His work? His work is to return you to your whole Mind.

So every bit of effort you are putting into, every ounce of energy and commitment and determination that you're bringing into play is energy you're applying to bringing your own Mind back together, undoing the fragmentation that seemed to occur when you said, "Oh, I'm only going to pay attention to this part of the infinitude of my Mind. And this part and all of the things I think inside this part, that's all that's Real and that's all I'm going to give my attention to."

But as you are engaging in the hard work that it seems to be that we're talking about, you are helping the Holy Spirit—your right Mind—fulfill Its purpose. You're helping It do Its work. It can't do Its work if you don't willingly participate. And willingly participating means diligently staying on task. That's what.

Again, and not a lot of fun, but you know what? You're listening to the Holy Spirit right now. And the Holy Spirit is providing inspiring news, inspiring

information, the inspiration of truth that will make it easier for you to help the Holy Spirit do His work, help your right Mind do Its work in bringing you back into your sanity.

. . . you have also made enormous efforts to help Him do His work. And He has not been lacking in appreciation for all you have done for Him. Nor does He see the mistakes at all. Have you been similarly grateful to each other? Have you consistently appreciated the good efforts, and overlooked mistakes? Or has your appreciation flickered and grown dim in what seemed to be the light of the mistakes? You are now entering upon a campaign to blame each other for the discomfort of the situation in which you find yourselves. And by this lack of thanks and gratitude, you make yourselves unable to EXPRESS the holy instant, and thus you lose sight of it.

Now this is where we will stop tonight, because you don't want to express a lack of faith, a lack of thanks and gratitude. You don't want to make yourselves unable to express the holy instant and thus lose sight of it. But you've got to find a way not to lose it.

And that's where the attentiveness comes in, that's where the commitment comes in, that's where the resolve gets set in place so that you persist when the temptation is to go back to the old habits and attempt to manipulate each other and then get mad because the other isn't manipulable anymore. And thus lose the holy instant, thus lose your peace and thus lose the willingness to get back into your peace because your old habit is such that being upset is satisfying, it means something to you. And you'd rather be upset, because you can't have what you want. You can't have control like you used to have. And then your partner has to wait while you wait to settle down and decide, "Oh, I think I'll try the holy instant again. I think I'll try the two-step again, if my partner will just keep his or her mouth shut long enough not to irritate me again so that I can do it." You see?

You see, these are the ways you manipulate yourselves into ignorance and keep each other at bay and you lose the point, you lose the blessing.

I love you all. And what you're learning here is significant. Be willing to do the work. And I look forward to being with your next time.

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)

Chapter 17 – Section: THE HEALED RELATIONSHIP

¹ *Sparkly Book – p.413, Last Par. / JCIM – p.173, Par. 5 / CIMS – p. 348, Par. 49*

First Edition – p. 338, Last Par. / Second Edition – p.363, Par. 7

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A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj, July 30th 2011
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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