

# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

## STUDY GROUP

### WITH RAJ

August 18<sup>th</sup> 2012

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THIS IS A ROUGH TRANSCRIPT.  
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Good evening. And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the Internet.

Well, we're going to spend another delightful evening talking about the wonderful subject of sin and fear and guilt.

You see, it's only when you don't *know* what sin and fear and guilt are and what function they perform, that it would seem to be an unpleasant subject to consider or a frightening one. But it is truly wonderful to understand what they are or as is the case tonight, what they aren't—*The Unreality Of Sin*, not the reality of sin.

Now before we begin, I want to remind everyone that in the beginning of the human condition—in the beginning of all that everyone is wanting to get out of—something simple happened: Two Sons or Daughters of God chose to join together and to abandon their union with their Father and get a divorce from God. And through the use of their Mind—which they completely overlook was in them because the Father placed it there—they decided to determine the meaning of everything and do it independently of God but joined together with each other.

Now as I've said before, when that decision was made and committed to, two things came into play. You remember what they are? Fear and guilt. They, like two sides of a coin, are always present together. They are always functioning together or against each other. And what it is imperative for everyone to understand is that that divorce, that decision and the introduction of fear and guilt didn't happen in the past. It's always been a current practice of each one of you. The divorce is being certified, you might say,

now...now...now...now...now, every moment in which you determine that you are going to decide what everything means.

So you don't have an actual lengthy history that has built up a residual strength in you that it is going to be difficult for you to overcome because the only thing that is keeping you from being Awake is a decision that is occurring now...now...now...now...now...now. And all that you need to do to escape from that decision is to decide something else, now...now...now...now...now.

And that something else is to say, "Father..." as the beginning of a sentence, as the beginning of a conversation, as the beginning of an involvement with God, "Father..." and then say whatever else you want to say, "...what is the truth here? What does this mean? Is it okay for me to sit here and do nothing? Is it okay for me to do something? Share with me Your Perspective of everything that I'm seeing because I understand that, although it looks to me like a physical universe, that it's really the Kingdom of Heaven *seen through a glass darkly*—seen through misperceptions that I'm introducing. So Father, I'm going to be still with You and ask: Will you share with me how You are seeing everything that's in front of me because I want to have the *shared* experience of Reality rather than the isolated experience of illusion."

It's that simple. And all you have to do is do that now...now...now...now...now...now. Because the only thing that's keeping you in the dark is something that you're doing now...now...now...now...now. This is the simplicity of it. If you make more of it than that, if you make it more complicated than that and you believe yourself, you will be making a decision not to see the truth now...now...now...now...now . . . not because you did something *in the past*.

So, a new section:

### ***THE UNREALITY OF SIN<sup>1</sup>***

I guess we better remind ourselves what sin means since it's a very different definition than the one generally accepted. Sin is an act that you engage in to attempt to accomplish the impossible. And it's not just any impossible, it's a very specific impossible. It is the attempt to be something in your own right without any connection to God. And it is the attempt to be something with such conviction and commitment that you will not, for any reason, give up the attempt.

And as we discussed last week, that goal has become an obsession—an addiction. And what has caused it to be an addiction is the fear that if you do not accomplish establishing your autonomous reality, you will die. And so you

will do anything you can to not die and that's what brings the obsessive addictive element into the picture.

That is the meaning of sin. It is You, the Son or Daughter of God, claiming vehemently, adamantly and totally that you're not a Son or Daughter of God, that you are an entity in your own right and by dammit, you're gonna prove it!

Now it begins, this section:

***The attraction of guilt is found in sin, not error.***

Guilt—the attraction to guilt—does not attach itself to error. Because when you make a mistake, you don't want to hold on to the mistake. But when it comes to sin, you refuse, as I said, to give it up because if you do, you will die. What does the well-known statement say? "*The wages of sin is death.*"<sup>2</sup>

Of course, [chuckle] it's not referring to sin as I am, it's referring to sins you can engage in in the world and with your fellowman or against your fellowman. But nevertheless, the experience of what sin truly is—the attempt to be something you cannot be—does promise death which is *exactly why* you are addicted to proving successfully, that you are a whole, real, puppet—a whole real person instead of a puppet, like Pinocchio.

So where does guilt come into the picture—*the attraction of guilt*? What could be attractive about guilt? What would make you *use* guilt to accomplish your goal, which is sin? Guilt is attractive in the same sense that *sirens* are attractive to seafarers to lure them onto the rocks and destroy them and their ships.<sup>3</sup> Guilt is used to attract. It's used to attract you and others to try even harder than you are to become an independent entity, which you cannot become.

Always that which attracts one to an addiction is a promise of wholeness that one doesn't currently have. That's what makes it attractive, that's what seems to make it believable.

Now in order to accomplish anything with guilt, it has to be used for a purpose. And the interesting thing is that you will never use guilt on yourself. Guilt is always used on someone else. Have you ever heard of "guilting" someone into behaving well? "Oh, yes . . . we guilted him sufficiently to cause him to change his ways in order to become free of the guilt trip we were laying on him."

Now guilt is an unavailable and non-existent experience to the holy Son or Daughter of God who hasn't gotten a divorce from the Father. But the moment the divorce—the moment the separation—was finalized by

commitment, relationships became the arena in which guilt and fear took form—manifested.

Now it's interesting . . . you can use guilt on someone to get them to conform to your rules—to those things that benefit you and make you apparently more real and respectable. And others can and will attempt to use guilt on you for the same reason.

Now I said that you will never use it on yourself, but you will in an indirect way. You will use your Brother or Sister as justification for feeling guilty. You will lay a guilt trip on yourself by saying, “Mary will think thus and thus about me if I do this . . .” or “Joe *does think* poorly of me. He thinks I'm guilty. He thinks I'm guilty and this is dangerous to me, this is impractical for me because I need him to be my friend, I need him to be on my side, I need him to succumb to the guilt trips I lay on him for the good of everyone, of course.”

So you see, you in a negative appraisal of yourself can guilt yourself by projecting the source of the guilt on others around you when they aren't projecting a guilt trip on you at all.

Now what is there about guilt that could be delicious? Delicious like a siren speaking to the seafarers—delicious and attractive, to pull one's attention in a direction that is self-defeating?

Believe it or not, guilt is the sweetener that makes the drug of choice easier to swallow, causing the goal to apparently become easier to attain. You say, “Oh, I don't like to feel guilty” but you use guilt—every single one of you use it. You use it on yourself, through projection on others laying a guilt trip on you. And you use it . . . you know what? . . . you use it to keep yourself unconscious of the truth. You use it to ensure beyond a shadow of a doubt, that you are going to stay on your quest to independent, righteous self-hood without anything getting in the way.

You feel guilt and you say, “I don't like the clutching in the area of my solar plexus. I don't like the uneasiness. I don't like the churning that makes me feel like throwing up.” But you know what? How many of you put it down? I'm not asking how many of you argue it away. I'm asking, how many of you just set it down as though it's meaningless, as though you're not going to indulge in it anymore? And why not? You can . . . and that's the point.

The feeling of guilt is used by you to spur you further in the direction of accomplishing your impossible goal. It's like negative attention. Negative attention can get more benefit to you if you're lonely than positive attention, if there isn't a lot of it.

So this brings us to the next point. Why do you use guilt? Because at the bottom line, you don't want to feel lonely. And when you got the divorce from your Father, your inseparability from your Brothers and Sisters and all Creation got interrupted—got separated into bits and pieces—and you found yourself alone with a need to establish connection. And guilt helps you establish connection, not by healing anything, but rather by complicating the situation, complicating the relationships so that you must apply yourself with more diligence to bringing about equilibrium. You see?

And you use guilt as a means of control in the relationship. It's all crazy. It's all insane, because as the subject of this section says, sin is unreal—*The Unreality Of Sin*.

*The attraction of guilt is found in sin, not error.*

It's like there are two arenas: Sin and error—devotion to insanity and an arena of mistakes. And it's only in the arena of sin that the attraction of guilt exists.

*Sin will be repeated BECAUSE of this attraction.*

You see? Mistakes are not repeated because of an attraction to making mistakes. But:

*Sin will be repeated BECAUSE of this attraction. Fear can become so acute that the sin is denied the acting out, but while the guilt remains attractive the mind will suffer, and not let go of the idea of sin.*

You see? You can guilt someone into good behavior but you can't make the belief in sin go away and you can't make the guilt go away. You can just change the behavior artificially, when what you want is a change of behavior because of healing—actual transformation, actual abandonment of the idea that you can do the impossible, so that you stop trying.

*. . . while the guilt remains attractive the mind will suffer, and not let go of the idea of sin. For guilt still calls to it, and the mind hears it and yearns for it, . .*

. . . heads right for the rocks, seduced by the attractiveness, the sweetness . . .

*. . . making itself a willing captive to its sick appeal.*

Now mind you, this is something every single one of you who hears my voice is doing right now. Interesting that you haven't died from it yet. More than interesting it's a clue: If you haven't died from it, then perhaps you haven't

accomplished the sins. And perhaps you haven't accomplished the sins because they're un-accomplishable and therefore there is no such thing as sin as an actuality—as a demonstrated object—Real.

***Sin is an idea of evil that CANNOT be corrected, and will be forever desirable.***

Is that an unfair? Is that something that some malevolent force has laid upon you? No. It's just the way the Kingdom of Heaven and the holy Son and Daughter of God are experienced when that holy Son or Daughter of God, in this moment now...now...now...now, is attempting not to be the Son or Daughter of God. It says that to be a Son or Daughter of God is *unbelievable*. "How can I believe that about myself . . . sinner that I am?"

You know, it's a time honored *law, imagined law*, that everyone is a sinner. It's imagined, because no one *yet* has been able to accomplish sin. No one has *yet* been able to accomplish becoming an independent entity in his own right with no Father, with no God, period. It hasn't happened.

So although this sounds very serious, because everyone is practicing this, the effect is minor compared to death, compared to an end, a forever end—extinction. A few aches or pains here or there these are minor compared to death.

So you don't need to get too alarmed that you may be engaging in sin, engaging in the convicted attempt to accomplish what you can't accomplish. And you can dare to consider that all it takes is a new devotion now...now...now...now...now. And that's all. Just abandoning the old devotion now...now...now. That's all.

And so although:

***Sin is an idea of evil that CANNOT be corrected, and will be forever desirable.***

. . . it doesn't make any difference because sin is unreal. There is no such thing as it, except as an imagination. That means that all it is, is a mistake that's correctible, that stands present to be corrected because that's what mistakes are for.

Now speaking of sin:

***As an essential part of what the ego thinks you are, . .***

. . . as an essential part of what your present sense of self thinks you are, as an essential part of what the church thinks you are . . .

*... you will ALWAYS want it.*

Amazing. But it 'tain't so! 'tain't so!

*As an essential part of what the ego thinks you are, you will ALWAYS want it. And only an avenger, with a mind unlike your own, could stamp it out through fear.*

See? A bigger mistaken one than the ego you think you are. You see? . .

*... could stamp it out through fear.*

But that isn't what will get rid of it. It is, we'll say:

*And only an [in quotes] avenger, with a mind unlike your own, . .*

... like the Holy Spirit . . .

*... could stamp it out through . . .*

... love. Could stamp it out through a different choice. Now:

*The ego does not think it possible that love, not fear, is really called upon by sin, . .*

... but you see, if sin is a mistake, it calls for correction. That's all. It's simple.

*The ego does not think it possible that love, not fear, is really called upon by sin, and always ANSWERS.*

It never fails to answer. But the ego doesn't think that's possible, of course.

*For the ego brings sin to FEAR, . .*

... the other side of the coin, the other part of the partnership that's always present. And they always play off of each other or against each other in a dance that keeps the dream going, instead of directing your attention where the solution is, which is to annul the divorce.

*For the ego brings sin to FEAR, . .*

... listen . . .

*... demanding . . .*

... What? . . .

*. . . punishment. Yet punishment is but another form of guilt's protection . . .*

... more of the insane reasoning . . .

*. . . for what is deserving punishment must have been really DONE.*

You see the use of logic there? The claim is that punishment is deserved. And then everyone else come up with the conclusion: “Well, if it’s deserved, then what it’s deserved for must have actually been accomplished.” So if . . .

*. . . the ego brings sin to FEAR, demanding punishment.*

... then, as I said, what is deserving punishment must have been really done.

*Punishment is always the great preserver of sin; . .*

“Well, he went to jail, he must have done it!” Ten years later, “Oh, I’m sorry, we did some DNA testing and although he served time and he was punished, he didn’t do it. Oh dear, well that’s the way it goes.”

*. . . punishment is but another form of guilt's protection for what is deserving punishment must have been really DONE. Punishment is always the great preserver of sin; treating it with respect, and honoring its enormity. For what you think is real you WANT, and will not let it go.*

Um . . . you see? You think that you are autonomous. You think you are a product of a physical universe. You think you can become something on your own and that although God may have created this universe, which is like a perpetual motion machine, you are now left free to make something out of yourself and it’s a God-given right. It’s what you are here for.

But there’s this fear of dying. And so you better make your time count. And there are even loop-holes: If you don’t quite get it right this lifetime you’ll have another lifetime to perfect yourself further. You see? When what’s needed is to step off the merry-go-round to say, “I’m not playing this game anymore.” That’s your right. And that’s what I’m telling you about. And that’s what I’m encouraging you to engage in so that you might see that you have not been placed under the definition: *sinner . . . ever!* And you’re not bound in any way. And all you have to do is change your commitment now...now...now...now.

*[For] what you think is real you WANT, and will not let it go. An error, on the other hand, is not attractive. What you see clearly as a mistake you WANT corrected.*

*Sometimes a sin can be repeated over and over, with obviously distressing results, but without the loss of its appeal.*

Anybody not had that experience, ever?

*Sometimes a sin can be repeated over and over, with obviously distressing results, but without the loss of its appeal. And suddenly, you change its status from a sin to a mistake.*

[snaps fingers] You make a decision with commitment, with realization.

*Now you will not repeat it; you will merely stop and let it go, unless the guilt REMAINS.*

Now before we get into what happens if the *guilt REMAINS* let's pay attention to this:

*And suddenly, you change its status from a sin to a mistake. Now you will not repeat it; you will merely stop and let it go, . .*

. . . here it is right out of the book. It's that simple. That's all there is to it. That's a very simple definition of the two-step or the practice of the holy instant. And the reason you can do that is because the divorce and the commitment to being on your own is occurring now...now...now...now...now...now...today...today...here...here...now...now, nowhere else. It's happening right where you can decide to do something different [snaps fingers] with just a simple choice, now...now...now.

So, don't labor under the idea that this is complicated or hard to do. It isn't full of *process*, it's full of simplicity.

So as we learn this about sin and the escape from sin, you can be happy that we've been discussing it and that you have been considering it, because it's easier to see how easy it is. As a result, you might risk the chance that it really is that easy and drop it, let it go, now...now...now...now...now. . . please.

*Now you will not repeat it; you will merely stop and let it go, unless the guilt REMAINS.*

You see? You can change the behavior and be a good boy or a good girl, but if the guilt remains you're not free. And you're not experiencing the Father's Perspective, which it is your Birthright to be experiencing.

*For then you will but change the FORM of sin, granting that it was an error, but keeping it uncorrectable. This is not really a change in your perception, for it is SIN that calls for punishment, not error.*

If you had seen it as a mistake, if you had seen it as error, you would not experience within yourself a call for punishment. It would simply be gone because it isn't present in the mindset, I'm going to say, of "an error to be corrected." You see?

*The Holy Spirit CANNOT punish sin.*

Why? Oh-h, the subject of this section is: *The Unreality Of Sin*. If it's unreal the Holy Spirit cannot punish it.

*Mistakes He recognizes, and would correct them all as God entrusted Him to do. But sin He knows not, nor can He recognize mistakes which cannot be corrected.*

You see? Mistakes which cannot be corrected constitute an experience of being held in bondage to uncorrected mistakes which does constitute suffering, which means punishment is being enacted, which means you must have actually accomplished something impossible, when you didn't—when you haven't.

*The Holy Spirit CANNOT punish sin. Mistakes He recognizes, and would correct them all as God entrusted Him to do. But sin He knows not, nor can He recognize mistakes which cannot be corrected. For a mistake which cannot be corrected is meaningless to Him.*

It's meaningless because there is no such thing. And so he's not fooled and he doesn't labor under a misunderstanding that could even develop into a "fact" which could be believed and committed to. Dangerous territory!

It's simple.

*Mistakes are FOR correction, and they call for nothing else.*

They don't even call for a three hour lecture to set you straight.

*Mistakes are FOR correction, . . .*

... letting go of, dropping ...

*... and they call for nothing else. What calls for punishment must call for nothing.*

Why? Because what calls for punishment could only be sin and sin doesn't exist. Sin is unreal. Sin is something that cannot happen and has not ever happened. And so what calls for punishment, must call for nothing.

*Every mistake MUST be a call for love.*

What does that mean? It means that every mistake that is brought to your attention is a call for you not to abandon your union with your Father and your devotion to that which is nothing more than your right Mind, the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit's Perspective, which is the Father's Perspective held in trust for you while you play with sin and fear and guilt.

*What, then, is sin? What could it be but a mistake you would keep hidden; a call for help that you would keep unheard and thus unanswered? In time, the Holy Spirit clearly sees the Son of God can make mistakes. On this you share His vision. Yet you do not share His recognition of the difference between time and eternity.*

Again:

*In time, the Holy Spirit clearly sees the Son of God can make mistakes.*

Oh, mistakes ... those are the correctible things. Those are the easy things, because no one wants to be experiencing error. No one wants to be experiencing mistakes.

*... His recognition ...*

... the Holy Spirit's *recognition* ...

*... of the difference between time and eternity.*

I'm sorry:

*On this you share His vision. Yet you do not share His recognition of the difference between time and eternity. And when correction is completed, time IS eternity.*

Now this is important.

*[And] when correction is completed, time IS eternity.*

It's like when the correction of your misperception occurs, the material world and universe *IS* the Kingdom of Heaven. You see? *Time IS eternity.*

Everything that caused eternity, which is the context of the Kingdom of Heaven, suffuses itself into your limited experience of time in a physical world and universe, transforming your experience of it as your ignorance falls away from your vision and everything becomes crystal clear in its actuality.

And so, you find that time, what you had called time, . . what shall we say? Um...the duration, the eternity of Creation, replaces time. That's the point. That's what this little decision now...now...now...now...now means. That's what it promises. That's the reason the *Course* educates about it. That's the reason I'm taking time to elaborate on it, so that the simplicity of it can register with you. And the *awfulness of sin* that's part and parcel of the sinner that you are, born into sin as you were, poor souls that you are. You see? It's time to Wake up from this insanity!

It's time to break your independence from your Father so that you might step forth with the garments of sin falling off your back onto the ground never to be seen again, because everyone who said it was your true nature was wrong. And it's wrong for you to believe it. And it's wrong for you not to challenge it by simply practicing a new decision, now...now...now...now...now...here...this moment, because the opposite is being brought into play now...now...now...now...here in this moment. And its effect is only as strong as the commitment to your denial of the Kingdom of Heaven and your holiness is in this moment now...now...now...now. Do you get it?

I love you all. Enjoy this expanded understanding of sin and its nothingness and of your holiness and the ease with which you can experience it again.

I look forward to being with you all next time.

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<sup>1</sup>*A Course In Miracles (reference pages)*

*Chapter 19 – Section: THE UNREALITY OF SIN*  
*Sparkly Book – p.455 / JCIM – p.190 / CIMS – p.383*  
*First Edition – p. 376 / Second Edition – p.404*

<sup>2</sup>*Romans 6:23*

<sup>3</sup>*Jason and the Argonauts—Greek Mythology*

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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](mailto:paul@nwffacim.org)