

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

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

Surprise! God did not give you the capacity to think.

Again, God did not give you the capacity to think. That's enough to keep you busy for the next week.

As consciousness, as conscious awareness, you have the capacity to what? Pay attention. Not think. Thinking is not natural to you. And yet you think that it's not only the most natural thing to you, you think that it is synonymous with being conscious. You think that thinking is your function. "My God, if I weren't to think, what would I do?" Well, I'll tell you something: In the Silence, you would learn a whole lot. Because in the Silence, you would be present with things. You would be present with each other. Not shielded against each other by means of your thoughts or your demeaning definitions, or even your loving thoughts and definitions. This is a key point.

Now. I want to back up so-to-speak to the beginning. *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*¹ And God being God, infinitely, was called Creation. And God's Self-Expressions, God's Extension of Himself was only like Himself. And you are His Self-Expression. You are what God is expressing Himself as—right there where you are!

God is not expressing you, God is expressing Himself right where you are. God Presencing Himself is what you Are. And in the beginning the Sons and Daughters of God were innocent—guiltless. And guilt was an unknown word. And, not any of the Sons or Daughters of God had had a single thought. They

experienced the bliss—the peaceful joyous bliss—of being consciously aware, infinitely speaking, of all of Creation. Because that which was the Mind of God was what was Presencing Itself, as what you might call, their Mind.

And so everything that occupied the Mind of God occupied the minds of the Sons and Daughters of God. And Being was a matter of the conscious reveling in the awesomeness—the infinite awesomeness of Creation. Because all of Creation infinitely speaking, was immediately and simultaneously available to every Son and Daughter of God to feel and experience and to be loved by, because as I've said, Love is the substance of Being.

And so, Love is the substance of Creation. And if all Creation is what constitutes the content of the minds of the Sons and Daughters of God, then the experience is one of being infinitely Loved. And at the same time, being infinitely Loving.

Now, figuratively speaking, we're going to say that a couple of the Sons and Daughters of God decided to play a game called, "Let's Pretend." Let's pretend that we are sea-farers. And let's pretend that as we sail the seven seas, we come across pirates. And we dedicate our lives to eradicating the seven seas of pirates and the dastardly deeds that they do to poor innocent human beings.

And the Father looks at them participating in this game of "Let's Pretend" and thinks nothing of it. And as they play their game, they come across pirates and they fight with them and they run'em thru and they make a little hash mark on the end of their sword for each one—each dastardly pirate that they've killed. And at the end of the day, they get together and they compare hash marks. "I killed eighteen pirates!" "Well, I killed thirty-three. You didn't do quite as good as me. I did the best!"

Of course, all of this is thinking.

Now, here they have gotten really intent upon the game they're playing—really caught up in it. And so the one who only killed thirteen, feels bad. And the one that killed more feels really good. And so they have a way of measuring themselves and each other. How? By means of thinking. And one is not as good and one is very good. Thinking is used for comparisons. Thinking is used for value judgments.

Thinking is used for ascertaining one's value or one's valuelessness. Thinking is used for determining another's value or valuelessness. And what happens? It becomes obvious that in this state of imagination, one has emotions—good proud feelings and sad, self-demeaning feelings. And those engaging in these games realize that these emotions are usable. For what purpose? For the

purpose of control. For the purpose of manipulation. Because thinking amounts to judgment—evaluation that is consummated in judgment.

Now, here killing has gone on in the imagination. Assessments of each other have occurred. Valuations and devaluations have occurred. And acts of manipulation have developed between these individuals perceiving themselves to be “sailors of the seven seas”—the vanquishers of pirates, the do-gooders! But even as the do-gooders, they still can do real well, or not so good. And then feel bad or good because of where they stand. And they end up hurting each by means of their judgments.

Now, the Father continues to watch. The Father sees that nothing but imagination is going on. He sees that no-one has been killed. And He sees that the “sailors of the seven seas” who are feeling good or bad depending upon which end of the stick they are looking from, are not guilty of anything either because He knows they’re not “sailors of the seven seas” and He knows that whatever they’re feeling and whatever they think they’re doing isn’t actually happening except within the context of this imaginative scenario that they have built up and played into. And so, there is no judgment from the Father except, “These are my beloved Sons and Daughters in whom I am well pleased, because they haven’t for a moment stopped being Me expressed—Me expressing. I have not been altered by their imagination. And they, the Sons and Daughters—My Sons and Daughters—have not been altered by virtue of their imagination.”

And so, there is still no guilt—no actual guilt. And the Father, at no point, sees His Sons and Daughters as guilty. Oh, but they are denying who they Are. Because they’re claiming to be the “sailors of the seven seas” and they are ignoring who they really Are. And isn’t that a slap in the face of God? Isn’t that a denial of God? Isn’t that an ignoring of their Source? Well, if God were to say something, He would say, “Yes, if they could actually do it.” You see. “But they can’t actually do it. And so it hasn’t been done. And regardless of the way they are choosing to perceive themselves at the moment, they are still My beloved Sons and Daughters in whom I am well pleased.”

And so, here you all are, engaged in thinking as you go through your days and weeks. You use thinking to define yourselves: “I’m a nurse. I’m a doctor. I’m an anesthesiologist. I’m a yoga teacher. I’m a housewife. I’m a mother.” In other words, I am what I think I am. I am the definition I have arrived at by virtue of thinking.

But I want you to understand something. We’re talking here . . . we’re reading about the guiltlessness of the Son of God. And we’re talking about each of you being right now the Christ—the Son or Daughter of God, nothing less. The question is, how do you arrive at the experience of that?

Well, according to thinking: You arrive at that, by perfecting yourself, by becoming a better and better “role.” And by overcoming the negative assessments you make of yourselves and the negative assessments that others make of you. And by cleansing yourself and purifying yourself of all of the awful things you’ve done—all of the shortcomings you have—all of the things that affected others negatively because you were not able to fulfill your role well. That’s what you think. That’s what you *think!* Pay attention to the words.

But we talked last week about the fact that the way to become free of guilt is to stop thinking. We said that the way to get free of it—the way to get in touch with your guiltlessness—is to shift from body identification to Mind identification. Simply shifting your focus of attention from one thing you consciously experience today to another thing you consciously experience today. Because each of you does experience Mind and each of you does experience body.

To whatever degree any of you are bound to suffering, sorrow, sickness, sin and death, it can be attributed to one thing only: *thinking*. Now I don’t just mean thinking . . . your thinking. You think very specific things, you think: “I am a body. I am a mortal. I know that in the sweet bye and bye I will experience my immortality, but right now I’m a mortal in a mortal body. I’m subject to sickness and death. I’m subject to injury. I’m subject to distress others have with me. I’m subject to the strongest will around me.” Or, alternatively, arrogantly: “I know that I have the capacity to be at least as strong as the strongest will around me, and it’s my learning to learn how to stand up to the strongest will around me and be equal to it, so that it’s a draw—and there is balance, equality, and therefore, no more war with that one.”

But the fact is that you can look back over the centuries and find that this line of thinking has not proven to be true. It hasn’t brought peace. It hasn’t brought invulnerability to injury, accident, sickness. The culprit is thinking. And that’s why the answer lies in what we’ve referred as the Silence—the Silence within you—which simply means the place where thinking isn’t going on, where you’re just being present . . . conscious awareness. You call it Meditation—it’s a specific practice. It’s like a specific use of your mind, a unique and intermittent use of your mind which even used intermittently, can reduce your blood-pressure and benefit you physically. Why does it do that? Because even intermittently, the conscious experience of Silence, the Silence within you, because it embodies the very nature and function of your Being—your divine Being as the Son or Daughter of God that you are—it evidences Itself as changed, what you would call, physical experience, healing in one form or another.

That's how valuable the Silence is. That's how valuable not thinking is.

Now, I wanted to make one point perfectly clear before we go into the book. And that is, that even right now, you have not sinned against God. And in God's Eyes, you are not guilty. And you do not have to overcome His Perception of you as being guilty before you can be let back into His Presence, or back into the Kingdom of Heaven. You do not have to atone to God for something God knows you could never do and therefore have never successfully accomplished.

Because God does not see you guilty, God has no cause for punishing you. The very concept of punishment can't come into existence until guilt is established as a reality. And since guilt is not established in your Father's Mind, there is no penalty due you. And no penalty you have to pay. You see, you're already paying a penalty by thinking. But it's not a penalty laid upon you by anything outside of you. It's just the experience one has when he or she attempts to do something that is impossible to do. When you try to do the impossible, you're constantly faced with the impossibility of it. And the continued attempt to do what you can't do is not comfortable. That's all.

Let's go into the book.

When you have accepted the Atonement for yourselves, . . .²

What would that be? What would be the Atonement that you would accept for yourselves? The Atonement would be the acceptance of the awareness that you're not guilty, together with the abandonment of that which caused you to seem to be guilty which is, thinking, reasoning, coming to conclusions and treating yourself and others on the basis of conclusions arrived at as a result of thinking, which the Father did not give you the capacity to do.

When you have accepted the Atonement for yourselves, you will realize that there IS no guilt in God's Son.

Either you or anyone else.

And ONLY as you look upon him as guiltless can you understand his oneness. For the idea of guilt brings a belief in condemnation of one by another, . . .

You see, it takes two to have a difference of opinion, a different point of view that can amount to condemnation

. . . ONLY as you look upon him. . .

. . . your brother . . .

. . . as guiltless can you understand his oneness. For the idea of guilt brings a belief in condemnation of one by another, projecting separation in place of unity.

Or we could say, imagining . . .

. . . separation in place of unity.

Now this next sentence is very important:

You can condemn only YOURSELF, . .

Let's stop right there:

You can condemn only YOURSELF, . .

You [chuckling] you can, with great skill, invite others to condemn themselves, but they have to engage in the condemnation—they have to agree with you. And others can invite you to condemn yourself but only *you* can condemn yourself!

You can condemn only YOURSELF, and by so doing you cannot know that you ARE God's Son.

How do you condemn yourself? By thinking. In the Silence in you, it is impossible to condemn yourself. In the Silence and the peace of the Silence in you—as full conscious awareness—it is impossible for you to condemn.

Well, you know the phrase, “The devil made me do it!” or, “He made me do it! He's making me feel miserable!” Let's be honest, he may be firmly, enthusiastically and aggressively inviting you to condemn yourself and to believe that you are what he sees you are, but *you* have to take the bait, and YOU have to agree. And when you agree, you have engaged in condemning yourself.

And you had to arrive at that decision by thinking. And the way out of the whole mess is to *stop thinking!* When you have stopped thinking and are in your peace, you can hear the invitations of others, no matter how aggressively they're put forth to see yourself as condemnable. But you see it as nonsense and it clearly stands forth to you as a behavior reflecting certain thoughts that that one is engaging in about himself in his world that he is caught by, and that it is illegitimate for him to be caught by.

And so, it does not call forth defense from within you. But calls forth the clarity in you about the truth about your brother so that you might respond to the underlying ignorance that is causing your brother to try to control you so that you will be in a way that doesn't offend his definitions. And you become an agent for change. And the way you are an agent for change is benign, is the embodiment of Love.

You can condemn only YOURSELF, and by so doing you cannot know. . .

. . . you can not know . . .

. . . that you ARE God's Son.

Why? Because in order to condemn yourself you have to be engaged in thinking which means that you are still claiming to be an orphan. You're still identifying yourself as an orphan. And as long as you are claiming that you're an orphan by means of your employing judgment, you are consciously denying what you truly are. And are still experiencing the disconnect from God. And so . . .

. . . you cannot know that you ARE God's Son. You have denied the condition of his Being, . .

. . . which means you have denied the condition of your Being.

What is your condition? Your condition is, that you're nothing more nor less than what God is Presencing Himself as right there where you are. And your function is the function of His Mind that He's embodying right there where you are, which is Love not guilt, which is purity not conflict, which is that which cannot be caught in limitation.

You have denied the condition of his . . .

. . . your . . .

Being, which is his perfect blamelessness.

That's the condition of your Being. That *is* the condition of your Being.

Out of Love. . .

. . . meaning, what the Father is.

Out of Love he was created, . .

... you were created.

...and in Love he abides.

You abide right now! There is no judgment upon you from the Father. You are not guilty in the Father's eyes.

Out of Love ...

... you were ...

... created, and in Love he ...

... you abide.

Goodness and mercy have always followed him, . .

... always followed you ...

... for he ...

... you ...

... has always extended the Love of his Father.

You see, even though a few of the Sons and the Daughters of God are swashbucklers on the high seas in their imagination, they haven't stopped being the Sons and Daughters of God reflecting God, embodying God. None of you has for a moment ever in the slightest way diminished the fullness of God that God is Being right where you are. So you have always extended the Love of your Father, the Being of your Father.

You see, we're still talking about a shift of perception, a shift from body identification to Mind identification, from orphanhood to the Sonship, from orphanhood to the conscious experience of having a Father, of having a Source that is responsible for every aspect of your Being.

Oh, but as a body it seems obvious to you, as an orphan it seems obvious to you that you're responsible for your well-being, and that's why you have to think. You have to think so you can figure out how to be responsible for yourself, you see.

Thinking is always a process of problem-solving. You think in order to overcome the problem of being. And the problem of being that you're experiencing is this mad idea that you're an orphan, that you're on your own,

that you are a body instead of the infinite, boundless, boundaryless Mind in which the experience of body and Universe, and all of Creation is going on.

As you perceive the holy companions who travel with you, . .

Well, what does that mean so far? Who are these holy companions who travel with you? Well, it is true that you are companioned by the Holy Spirit. And you are companioned by those who are Awake. But as you perceive that everyone that's in your experience, all of your brothers and sisters are holy companions. Because in actuality, regardless of how you're seeing them or how they're seeing themselves, they are and must be right now, nothing more nor less than the evidence of God Being right now, in the act of Creation right now, right there where they are and right where you are, . .

. . . you will realize that there IS no journey, . .

Because becoming equal to the Son of God or refining yourself, or spiritualizing yourself until you're worthy of being the Son of God is a bunch of imaginative nonsense. Because all of you on the road thinking you're moving toward your ultimate, Are the ultimate.

So the journey is meaningless. And the only thing called for is for all of you to wake up to the truth right here where you are on the road, which is why I say so many times, bring innocent eyes to your apprehension of everything so that you might see the more of what God is Being right here, today—now. Because right here on the road that you think you're moving forward on to your ultimate goal is, the Ultimate simply waiting for you to see it because you've stopped ignoring it, thinking that it's somewhere down the road at the end of time. And remember last week I pointed out that the end of time is nothing more than the boundary between your identifying yourself as body and your identifying yourself as Mind.

*The Son of God, who sleepeth not, has kept faith with his Father
FOR you.*

Who is the Son of God who sleepeth not, that has kept faith with his Father for you? The Holy Spirit. What is the Holy Spirit? That which is nothing more than your right Mind.

The Son of God, . . .

. . .the Real You . . .

. . .who sleepeth not, has kept faith with your Father FOR you.

. . . while you pretend to be an orphan. All of what's true about you is true right now, present right now, active right now and available to you the moment you stop thinking—the moment you let yourself experience Silence—the moment you express genuine curiosity. And genuine curiosity is not a matter of saying, “What is that, what is that, what is that, what is that, what is that, what is that, what is that?” . . . and never shutting up, just being aggressively curious, “What is that? What is that? And what is that, and what is that, and what is that?” That's not Silence.

When you have genuine curiosity, what do you do? You shut up and pay attention!

Ahh . . . that is the function of Mind, isn't it. That is your divine function. And in the absence of all of the jabbering that occurs that you call thinking, in the Silence that ensues, you end up being nothing more or less than that which is paying attention, the condition or state of attentiveness. An attentiveness is an invitation for Something to enter *you*, you see.

I've said before, that there is a place of excellence in you, divine excellence, ultimate excellence, right here, right now. And we've referred to it as the Altar in the very center of you. And this is the place of Silence, in which, because there is Silence, the Voice for Truth, the Holy Spirit—that which is nothing more than your right Mind—can begin to register with you and bring you into the Oneness of yourself. Because in the silent attentive invitation to know, you've abandoned orphanhood. You've stepped over the boundary between body identification and Mind identification.

You can be curious about anything and everything that confronts you. It's easy to be curious about a new flower that has just bloomed. It is equally easy to be curious about a neighbor or a friend or anything else that is in front of you during your day. All it means is—and nobody needs to know that you're doing this—all it means is that you're willing to be still and pay attention with a silent invitation to Know and see the More that is there than what your definitions have been allowing you to see.

So you do not need to go into a monastery or a cave to wake-up. You have to be willing to be more present with everything that has been in your daily experience than you've ever been before, minus the definitions you have placed between you and that which you would pay attention to.

There is no road to travel on, and no time to travel through.

You see, but that's the idea, you've got to go on your trek—your spiritual quest. And you're going to go on it moving forward in time. No, that is not going to

work because time is a perception. It is a definition that you have a very strong belief in.

The way out of time is to step over the threshold between body identification and Mind identification.

There is no road to travel on, and no time to travel through. For God waits not for His Son in time, being forever unwilling to be without him.

Well, we can put it a little bit more direct than that. God is not forever unwilling to be without you, God forever Wills to be *with* you. And if that is God's Will, that *is* what is done. And that *is* the way it is, no matter what you think.

. . . God waits not for His Son in time, being forever unwilling to be without him. And so it has always been.

Therefore, so it is now. So not only are you not labeled guilty by God, with a guilt that has to be paid for, you aren't separated from Him by time or by anything. And so it has always been.

Let the holiness of God's Son shine away the cloud of guilt that darkens your mind, and by accepting his purity

. . . Whose? The Son of God

. . . by accepting his purity as yours, learn of him that it IS yours.

Now . . .

Let the holiness of God's Son shine away the cloud of guilt that darkens your mind, . .

I want to point something out here. Let's say an injury has occurred, an illness seems to be occurring. Misfortune has taken place and the one to whom its happened is suffering. And that one comes to you wanting healing.

How are you going to heal?

Well, I'm going to tell you first of all, that if you hold that one to be a body, you're not going to heal. If you hold him in your mind to be an organism that is the current end result of evolution, you're not going to have healing. If you see him as an entity who has not followed the rules, and is therefore suffering from having broken the rules, you are not going to see healing. If you see him

as a body, whatever he's suffering from has to be legitimate because its part and parcel of being a body—it's part and parcel of being an orphan.

If you're going to see healing there, you are going to have to consider your brother from a different vantage point. You're going to have to be willing in your mind, to step across the threshold of body identification to Mind identification. You're going to have to step across the boundary in your mind of orphanhood to Sonship.

You're going to have to do that yourself because that's the only place where your brother will be guiltless. And as long as he is guilty, he has no right not to be suffering because his suffering is punishment for his guilt—they are inseparable.

And I'm telling you that when you take the time to be present with your brother who is in need, and you are willing to step over that threshold from body identification to Mind identification—from orphanhood to Sonship—you're first of all, *not* going to be engaging in thinking. And you're going to be quiet, so that you are receptive to the Vision of the truth about your brother and you will hold him to be innocent. You will find yourself holding him in his innocence, in a conscious clear awareness of innocence that is God derived, and that God never withheld or withdrew from him and that which is therefore Absolute right now.

You're going to have to take the radical stand, the radical position, the radical unreasonable position that your brother is guiltless. Why? Because he's not an orphan. Because he isn't what he thinks he is. He isn't even what you thought he was, even with your best thinking. He's more than that. And you've got to be willing to step across that boundary and join with the Father.

And when you do, you will see healing. You call such a step of crossing over the boundary and embracing a completely foreign—these aren't the best words— but a completely foreign mindset, you see that as not natural, as not normal. But until you begin to do it, you will not have the opportunity to find out that you are actually crossing over the boundary into your natural condition, which uncovers the truly natural condition of others to them.

And I will tell you that every spiritual healing that has ever occurred, has been the evidence of someone *not* agreeing with the evidence, the behavioral evidence, the experiential evidence, or the physical evidence of sickness, illness, injury and even death. Such a stance has to have been taken. And in all cases, in order for that stance to become established in the one being the agent for change, that one has to have had a love of God first. That one, even if only temporarily, has had to own his place in the Sonship and love God so much that he wanted what God is Being to be uninhibitedly manifest, no

longer covered up. Because he loved his brother enough to stop thinking about him and stop misidentifying him and stop looking at him from the vantage point of being an orphan himself.

The Agent for change had to abandon his orphanhood and let God into him.

Continuing . . .

You are invulnerable BECAUSE you are guiltless. You can hold on to the past ONLY through guilt. For guilt establishes that you will be. . .

. . .future tense . . .

. . .punished for what you have done, and thus depends on one-dimensional time, proceeding from past to future.

Past to future . . . ah-ha . . . history! You are all victims of your history. And you are *only* victims of your history. You love your history, you value your history. But history is a two-edged sword we might say. If you have an excellent history, let's say your work history is excellent, and you have worked for excellent companies and each time you move from one company to another it was with a position of advancement and greater responsibility . . . ahhh . . . your history gives you identity. You see. And of course you need a history to give you identity, because as an orphan, you don't have an inheritance from your father or mother, you see. Your history tells you what you are, and it tells you how good you are at what you are.

But you know what? That kind of a history victimizes you, just as much as the history of the three jail terms you had: The long periods of unemployment that you had, and the periods of employment you had that were, humm, not that great—nothing to indicate substance and quality to you. You understand that that kind of history can victimize you. But you don't understand that an excellent history victimizes you as well. In fact, it almost victimizes you more tightly because pride is attached to it.

Remember, no matter what the past says about you, it is reflecting and embodying and seeming to manifest one thing only: The orphan mentality. And it is embodying the results of your very definite thinking processes because you had to think in order to come up with the definitions that say, "A succession of good jobs with increasing responsibility means you are a person of substance, that you are respectable and that you are valuable!" Someone had to think that up. It isn't true. You see. But because it sounds so good and it's so pleasing, you know what? It makes you really reluctant to abandon being an orphan. It makes you really reluctant to step over the threshold into

that natural condition of your Being in which your every need is met because it's the nature of Being Itself to identify Itself—to manifest Itself, to experience Itself wholly, fully, with nothing withheld from It.

And so everything is, for lack of better words, provided to you. Those words have meaning for an orphan. But for one who is Awake, everything *is you*. You are wholeness from which nothing is left out infinitely. You don't have to earn it. You don't have to behave in a certain way in order to experience it. It is your Birthright!

Your history tells you what you are and how good you are at being it. It tells you whether you're a good person or a bad person, a good orphan or a bad orphan. But because its only telling you whether you're a good orphan or a bad orphan, it isn't telling you anything about *you*. Do you see that? Because you are the Son or Daughter of God, the wholeness of Being embodied by God, not by your actions, right where you are—right where you are . . . Aware.

You can hold on to the past ONLY through guilt. For guilt establishes that you will be punished for what you have done, and thus depends on one-dimensional time, proceeding from past to future. No-one who believes this can understand what ALWAYS means.

When you hear the word, “always” you tend to think of it in terms of time—endless time. The meaning of the word “always” can in a limited way, be understood as synonymous with wholeness—infinite wholeness.

No-one who believes this. .

I'm going to back up . .

You can hold on to the past ONLY through guilt. For guilt establishes that you will be punished for what you have done, and thus depends on one-dimensional time, proceeding from past to future. No-one who believes this can understand what ALWAYS means. And therefore guilt MUST deprive you of the appreciation of eternity. You are immortal BECAUSE you are eternal, and always MUST be now. Guilt, then, is a way of holding past and future in your minds to ensure the ego's continuity. For if what has been WILL be punished, the ego's continuity is guaranteed. Yet. . .

. . .and this is key . .

. . .the guarantee of your continuity is God's, not the ego's. And immortality is the opposite of time, for time passes away, while immortality is constant.

What are you guilty of? Are you guilty of things you did poorly as an orphan? Are you guilty for what you thought you did as a figment of your imagination?

If you're not guilty, why aren't you Awake? Ahh, [chuckling] see, the ego will stick ya somewhere, "If you're not guilty, how come you're not Awake?" Well, you don't have to be guilty in order to not be Awake. You simply have to be engaging in something that doesn't work. You simply have to be attempting to do something that's impossible. But because you can't accomplish it, you can't be guilty for it. If you are not guilty for it, there cannot be a penalty for it that is going to take time for you to fulfill before you will be free.

If you were guilty of anything, we might have to say that you were guilty of thinking. But remember my opening statement? *God did not give you the capacity to think!* If you thought you had the capacity to think and you could actually accomplish it, then you might be guilty. But to be thinking is as much an illusion as the pretend role of being a swashbuckling sailor on the seven seas. You can seem to engage in it, but nothing is happening. So you're not even guilty of thinking.

Now, let's be grounded here: If you are engaging in thinking, you are engaging in something you can't accomplish. And in engaging in something you can't accomplish, does constitute a distraction from truth.

The answer is to stop engaging in the distraction. That's all!

And so this week, I'm going to invite you to go through your day, doing your best to remember for as long as you can—which you'll find won't be very long, but to try to the best of your ability for as long as you can—to look at a thing and not think about it. To look at a thing, to embrace the view whether it's a wide angle vision or a close-up narrow, focused vision. And just be present with that thing and pay attention.

So you have a chatty neighbor. And she's a little bit crotchety and she's always complaining. And it's not much fun to be around her because everything that comes out of her mouth is some sort of negative and she happens to be right behind you in the line in the grocery store while you're waiting for the person with a humungous order in front of you that's going to take time.

Ordinarily, if you're confronted with this, you place between yourself and this person a barrier of a definition—one that will allow you to discount her or him—one that will allow you to stand there without being touched. You will

maintain a picture made up of imaginative thoughts that have, I'm going to say, devolved into a poor definition.

But now, here you are, tomorrow or the next day, after I've said, *Be willing to be present without thinking*. What are you going to do? Well, a hint: Try listening below the surface. Try being present with her, or him. Listening for what is underneath their behavior—his behavior, her behavior. *Listen for their need*.

You hear the word, “listen?” That's how you shut-up thinking. *You listen*. Listen many times during the day. Practice being present with your world without thinking as often as you can. Like I say, it may only be a fraction of a second before [finger snap] your mind is racing with thoughts. But your intent to do this, brought into play repetitively during the day, will bring you to a point where your being present with another, or being present with a thing without thoughts, endures a little bit longer.

There's more there of what God is Being than what you're seeing. Want to experience it enough to be genuinely and honestly curious and be still . . . still the thinking . . . still the awful thinking . . . still the malicious thinking . . . still the judgmental thinking! And still the false, syrupy love that you would embrace them in.

Be still . . . knowing that in the Silence where you are crossing over the threshold between body and Mind identification, you are being the conscious invitation for the experience of God's Perspective, which is your true perspective.

That's your practice for this week. Now when we get together next week, I'm not going to ask you how well you did, or how many notches you have on your sword. It's not a test. It's a practice at coming back into your right Mind by letting your right Mind back in by abandoning the orphan mentality.

Guilt is a tool used in the realm of orphanhood only. And the penalties that it has been decided must be extracted as a result of guilt, only seems valid in the realm of orphanhood. Step over the threshold, and the fantasy is gone.

And you become an agent for change—a beneficent, benign presence inspiring those still bound by their sense of orphanhood to let go of it as well.

You're here to be an inspiration. The Real You, the Christ that you are, is here to be the inspiration that breaks the illusion—that ends the dream—not by doing anything to it, but by not being in it and knowing that you're not in it. So that you know that your brother isn't in it either and can show him the way out.

I love you, I love you, I love *you*, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, and I love you . . . and I love all of you.

Join me all of you, please, join me in the silence of honest curiosity and attentiveness so that we might all Be the mouthpiece for God—be the mouthpiece for Good, be the mouthpiece—the Place where that which inspires healing comes forth and heals.

I look forward to being with you next week.

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
¹*Book of Genesis, Bible*
Chapter 11 – Section – GUILTLESSNESS AND INVULNERABILITY
²*Sparkly Book – p.280, 3rd Full Par. / JCIM – p.117, Last Par.*
Chapter 13 –THE GUILTLESS WORLD / Section – INTRODUCTION
First Edition – p. 222, 1st Full Par. / Second Edition – p. 238, Par. 6

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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

