

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.

As we go into this new chapter, *The Problem of Guilt*, it will be easier to understand what the *Course* is saying if you remember that references to the ego are references to what we have been referring to as the orphan mentality—the orphan mindset.

The orphan mindset has a basic premise. And that is: that it—the orphan—is alone, separate, at a disadvantage, sourceless, but given a capacity to become something. This capacity has been given to him, the orphan says, “by God.” Not God the Father, not God the orphan's Father, but God, an everywhere present Presence with divine authority that created all these independent entities and gave these independent entities the capacity to become outrageously successful in every independent endeavor that that entity seeks to fulfill.

The only thing is, that because there really isn't any such thing as an orphan—a separate, independent entity—and because every orphan who thinks and believes he is an orphan really is the ever-present ongoing offspring, you might say, of God, he's living his life in constant denial of the truth about himself. And therefore, he's in a constant state of self-denial. And that is uncomfortable.

Now, because the prime motivator for the orphan is to become successful on his own, or on her own, it takes this discomfort—and as you'll read—projects it out there. It says: “I am not conflicted, but my world and everything in it is

polarized. It is in a constant state of conflict and I am therefore required to be in constant defense against it.”

And as this defense is carried out, the orphan mentality, the ego, takes on the responsibility of trying to apply order to chaos—order to the chaos it sees, order to the chaos it has projected on everything—in order not to have to take a look at the fact that the premise of its thought system is, that the thinker of the thought system is independent, and that independence is an illusion.

That’s what the ego is. It makes a little bit more sense when you understand that it’s a mindset you are employing, not a fact, not an actuality, but a creative, imaginative mindset that you are employing to the exclusion of your conscious awareness of who and what you divinely Are.

This discomfort is called guilt. This dissonance is called guilt. And as we talked about the last time we met, guilt is not to be overcome or ignored. It is to be dispelled.

This guilt, whether you attribute it to yourself or to others, does not have to be atoned for. In fact, you had better not engage in atoning for it because the more you do, the less you correct it, cause the correction of guilt comes in the dispelling of it, not the atoning for it. And you dispel guilt by a simple act, which we also talked about last time, the simple act of turning your attention from overcoming conflict, becoming a more and more successful orphan, to a simple act of extension of your attention outside your mindset.

The extension of your attention that occurs when you pray, when you say: “Father. . .” followed by whatever words constitute your prayer.

But, again, just the first word of the prayer is what breaks the illusion, because when you say “Father. . .” and you reach beyond your current mindset, you break the isolation. You break the isolation. And when you allow yourself to feel the influx of the Father’s response, guilt is nowhere to be found, either in you or in those you had projected guilt upon or the orphan mentality had projected guilt upon.

Keep in mind the word “dispel” because it is the only word relevant to the word “guilt.”

Now, let’s go into the *Book*, Chapter:

*Twelve*¹

The Problem of Guilt.

The ultimate purpose of projection as the ego uses it . . .

Now, what does it say?

. . . as the ego uses it . . .

It says that because projection is the Movement of Being, God, in the act of Being Mind, fully conscious of all that He is, is engaged in projection—and it is called Creation. So projection is Real. But projection, as the ego uses it, is a distortion of Real projection.

So, the ultimate purpose of projection as the ego uses it, is always to get rid of guilt. “Get it away from me! I’m not guilty! I’m not guilty!” You see? “I’m not responsible for this discomfort I’m feeling! I’ll pin the tail on the donkey out there—the brother, or the sister, or the boss, or the circumstance, or the weather. Get it away from me and leave me free!” And mind you, this should sound totally egotistical: “And leave me free to bring the gifts that God has given me in His creation of me as a separate individuality, to express intelligence and reason and a focused expression of will in a way that coerces the chaos that is going on, into order.”

Wow, what a thing if it could be done. What a success, if through the use of independent will, this ego—this orphan—could actually coerce everything that is of the nature of chaos, into order.

But of course, such a humongous task successfully completed, would have to be the sort of proof needed to demonstrate what the orphan has determined God created him for. God wouldn’t create him for a piss-ant, little, inconsequential accomplishment. Why? Well, that wouldn’t be very ego-satisfying, would it? No.

The ultimate purpose of projection as the ego uses it . . .

. . . as the orphan mentality uses it . . .

. . . is ALWAYS to get rid of guilt. Yet, characteristically, the ego .

..

. . . the orphan mentality . . .

. . . attempts to get rid of guilt from ITS viewpoint only, . .

In other words, to serve its purpose only.

. . . for much as the ego wants to retain guilt, YOU . . .

. . . not you the orphan, but YOU the divine one that you Are, that you can't stop being . . .

. . . find it intolerable, since guilt stands in the way of your remembering God, . .

Mind you, remembering God means remembering your Father, which means remembering that you are the Son of God, the Daughter of God. You are that which gets its identity from its Father.

So, in remembering God, it isn't exactly selfless like you might think. You could say it's ultimately, self-full. Because in remembering God, you rediscover who you Are and have never stopped being. Remembering God puts you back in your experience of your Real identity and being.

It's not [said in a tiny voice] this little orphan down on its knees, getting about as small as it can get, taking up as little space as it can take up, reaching up to this beneficent other, called God, so that a gift of healing, or a gift of success, or a gift of wealth, or a gift of peace of mind might be received and still leave you as a little orphan, a little inconsequential orphan taking up as little space as possible. You see?

No. Remembering God means, remembering that which brings you back into your full stature as the Son or Daughter of God—the Christ. That's what it means.

Again. . .

The ultimate purpose of projection as the ego uses it is ALWAYS to get rid of guilt. Yet, characteristically, the ego attempts to get rid of guilt from ITS viewpoint only, for much as the ego wants to retain guilt, YOU find it intolerable, since guilt stands in the way of your remembering God, Whose pull is so strong that you CANNOT resist it.

Wow, if it is so strong that you cannot resist it, and you are managing to be unconscious of it, you must be putting forth a great deal of effort whether you're aware of it or not.

On this issue, then, the deepest split of all occurs, for if you are to retain guilt, as the ego insists, YOU CANNOT BE YOU.

You cannot recognize, feel or embody the Christ that you Are.

Only by persuading you that IT . . .

... the ego ...

... is you ...

Only persuading you that you are an orphan . .

... could the ego possibly induce you to project guilt, . .

... instead of dispelling it ...

... and thereby KEEP it in your mind.

You see. If you project it and you believe your projection, you feel clean. And yet, all the projection has done is fooled you into believing that it isn't there, when it's still there, because you still think you're an orphan and as long as you insist that you are an orphan, you cannot be comfortable because you are engaged in denying your Self! Something which cannot be successfully accomplished.

Yet consider how strange a solution the ego's arrangement is. You project guilt to get rid of it, but you are actually merely concealing it. You DO experience guilt feelings, but you have no idea why.

[Chuckling] The reason you have no idea why you're experiencing them is because you have distracted yourself with the task that the orphan mentality has set before you to overcome the conflict that it has projected "out there" as guilty brothers and sisters. Guilty of what? Guilty of making the orphan miserable. You see.

[Chuckling] You do experience guilt feelings but you have no idea why.

On the contrary, you associate them with a weird . . .

... good word ...

... with a weird assortment of ego ideals, which the ego claims you have failed.

Well, what kind of weird assortment of ideals could you engage in? Well, you could engage in an attempt to succeed in the world of orphans without ever cooperating with them—even through mutual agreements. You could engage in the idea, the metaphysical idea, that everyone makes up their own reality and you're going to make up yours. And your reality is, that everybody—all the other orphans—will treat you well and lovingly, no matter how you treat them.

Or, you could have the weird idea, that if you do indeed abide by all of the mutual agreements that the orphans have come to as to how things work on how to have them be smooth and pleasant, that, after abiding by those rules, you will have no problems.

That's a weird idea. You know why? Well, there is a saying: "Rules are to be broken." Why is there a saying like that? Because [chuckling] rules that are built out of the imagination, which at the bottom line are always self-serving, will change as needed. There's no Principle there. There's no underlying stable intelligence there in the rules that have been made up.

You've heard of people working their whole life for a company, and at sixty-years old they retire and there's going to be a dinner party and always, there's been a big cash bonus and an automobile given, etc. And you arrive at your retirement party and they say, "We're really sorry Jim, but our funds have run out, but we have this beautiful gold watch for you."

What happened? Rules that have been made up by that which is a figment of the imagination—by many figments of the imagination—have no underlying Principle behind them. And so, the rules will change. The rules can be no more stable than the figment of the imagination that made them up. So it's a weird idea to think that if you abide by the general consensus of orphans, that you will inevitably end up having success, because of course, that's the reason the rules were set up.

Well, that's the reason the rules were set up when they were set up, but what are the circumstances today? Depending upon what the circumstances are today and what the vulnerabilities are that the orphans are experiencing, the rules will change.

You DO experience guilt feelings, but you have no idea why.

And the reason why is because you've misidentified yourself.

On the contrary, you associate them with a weird assortment of ego ideals, which the ego claims you have failed.

"Well sir, you would have gotten something more than a gold watch, if we had not discovered that back in 1945, you violated one of our basic laws and had an affair with one of the secretaries, and that disqualified you. We didn't think it necessary to tell you this because other than that, you were a very contributive member of our company and we valued that. But nevertheless, you're out of luck."

Someone else has a weird ego ideal that says—even using *Course* principles—“It’s your divine Function to express unconditional love and therefore, even though I have abused you, you have no right to be distressed with me. It’s your Function to continue to love me and feel no hurt and feel no distress in spite of the way I insist on behaving.” You see.

Another weird ego ideal, except that the actuality of it is, that even as orphans, very few will agree with such a weird ideal. And so, the word will come back to that one, “You have failed. You have failed at keeping me secure. You have failed at making me comfortable. You cannot have my continued attentive, unquestioning, foolish attention that never says stop.” You see. And so that one says, “Well, you’re being unfair. You’re breaking the rules!”

There are all kinds of weird ego ideals with which the ego can claim you have failed at.

Yet . . .

. . . now here we’re going to talk about the truth . . .

. . . you have no idea that you are failing the Son of God by seeing him as guilty.

Whether that Son of God that you’re seeing as guilty is yourself, or another. And how are you failing the Son of God? The most important Son of God, you? You’re failing the most important Son of God—you—by neglecting to say, “Father. . .” you see, and restore yourself to your Birthright in which no guilt exists, in which no orphans exists, in which no mutual agreements between orphans exists, because there never was an orphan, because you always were the Son or Daughter of God—the Christ.

Believing you are no longer you, . .

In other words, believing You, the Christ, are no longer the Christ, but a bonified, genuine orphan, . .

. . . you do not realize that you are failing YOURSELF.

Sounds dark and serious and depressing. But only if you’re still insisting on thinking of yourself as an orphan who’s doing all these bad things and therefore, deserves to feel guilty. But remember the important word relative to guilt, “dispel”? The answer is simple. All you have to do is dispel the guilt. Not cope with it, not react to it, not overcome it, not get better at being an orphan so you won’t feel guilty. But by remembering who you Are by remembering your Father and inviting your Father back into, for lack of better words, the equation.

CRUCIFIXION BY GUILT

Is the next Sub-Heading.

The darkest of your hidden cornerstones holds your belief in guilt from your awareness. For in that dark and secret place is the realization that you have betrayed God's Son by condemning him to death.

Strong words again. But as I said before, if as you sit here, or if as you listen, you do not identify yourself right now as the Son or Daughter of God—the innocent Christ, the full blown expression of all that God is Being right there where you are—then you have hidden the Christ that you Are, from yourself. And the ultimate effect of such denial is the snuffing out of any possibility of a remembrance that you are the Christ.

It is for the orphan to become so inflated that it totally obscures the truth about you and does away with it once and for all.

Now, I've put that into words figuratively speaking, except that the simple fact is, that you experience, even though they are illusory experiences, you experience this effort to do away with the Christ, as your own physical and mental illnesses. And physically, you walk one foot in front of the other into your grave and although you don't like the idea, you don't object to it. You don't object to it by doing what will effect your release!

Oh yes, research is done for better and better drugs and your doctors develop more and more skills to try to overcome death manually, can I put it that way, but its all done without ever challenging the idea that the doctors and the patients are all orphans. Its done without ever dispelling the need for those things to be done by doing the one thing that will undo your orphanhood, which is prayer: "Father. . . blah, blah, blah."

So, figuratively speaking, the orphan mentality has as its desire, to become so inflated that it absolutely totally and completely obscures what you really are and annihilates it by being such an inflated presence that there is not room for any vestige of the truth about you to remain to be rediscovered.

That's the figurative. The literal is what you watch every day: Sin, disease, death.

It's time to challenge that. It's time to challenge it by doing the one and only thing that will work: Let God back in! Acknowledge that you have a Source that you are inseparable from and from which *you* get your existence. You are

utterly dependent upon That which is being you, right now. And you have no capacity to be in any way, shape or form, truly, all by yourself.

. . . in that dark and secret place is the realization that you have betrayed God's Son by condemning him to death.

That dark and secret place is a hidden cornerstone. You know, out of sight out of mind . . . ha-ha-ha.

You do not even suspect this murderous but insane idea lies hidden there, for the ego's destructive urge . . .

. . . the orphan's destructive urge . . .

. . . is so intense that nothing short of the crucifixion of God's Son can ultimately satisfy it.

In other words, nothing can satisfy this poor little waif—this poor little orphan's need to prove itself and to become so big and so strong and so absolute in its power, that anything else claiming responsibility for that one's existence, can possibly exist.

Every single ego, every single orphan-mentality has this goal. And as each of you go through your day from the orphan's mindset, you are engaged in overcoming the odds, in overcoming the obstacles. Why? So that you can better and better arrive at a place of invulnerability and be God-like.

It . . .

. . . the ego . . .

. . . does not know who the Son of God is, because it is blind.

Oh-oh yes, and boy does it work to keep its blinders on. It refuses to see the truth, because it's so busy and so intent upon accomplishing its single-minded purpose: Power. Power equal to every need. Power equal to oppose every negative circumstance—every threatening circumstance.

Every single one of you wants to arrive at a point where you can wake up in the morning happy and go through your day without that happiness being challenged in any way, where there's not even a suggestion of infringement upon that happiness. That's what you want. And so, you use every means you have available to you as an orphan to achieve that goal. And it's not working.

And one of the more recent sayings is that: "Stupidity is the continued attempt to do what doesn't work." So . . .

It does not know who the Son of God is, because it is blind. Yet let it perceive guiltlessness anywhere, and it will try to destroy it, because it is afraid.

Here's the explanation:

Much of the ego's strange behavior . . .

. . . much of the orphan mindset's enactment of being . . .

. . . is directly attributable to its definition of guilt. To the ego, THE GUILTLESS ARE GUILTY. Those who do not attack . . .

. . . in other words, those who are benign . . .

Those who do not attack are its "enemies," because, by not valuing its . . .

. . . the ego's . . .

. . . interpretation of salvation, they . . .

. . . those who do not attack . . .

. . . are in an excellent position TO LET IT GO.

To let the ego go. To let the orphan mindset go. To recognize clearly that the ego mindset is a fabrication and not actual. And therefore, not worthy of validation.

Listen again:

Much of the ego's strange behavior is directly attributable to its definition of guilt. To the ego, THE GUILTLESS ARE GUILTY. Those who do not attack are its "enemies," because, by not valuing . . .

. . . the ego's . . .

. . . interpretation of salvation, they . . .

. . . those who do not attack . . .

. . . are in an excellent position . . .

. . . to disregard the orphan mentality, or disregard the ego . . .

. . . they are in an excellent position to LET IT GO. They have approached the darkest and deepest cornerstone in the ego's foundation, and while the ego can withstand your raising all else to question, it guards this one secret with its life, for its existence DOES depend on keeping this secret.

What secret? That there is no orphan. That there is no ego. And that the dispelling of any representation the ego puts forth by virtue of not identifying with it any longer because you have said, "Father . . ." and remembered God and yourself. Whatever threatens the ego's supposed existence, the ego sees as enemy. And those who are on the verge of discovering their guiltlessness, constitute the one and only threat the ego can be bothered by.

Why? Because when you remember your Father and therefore, yourself, you will disregard the ego. And as I've said, over and over again, the only thing the ego cannot protect itself against—cannot defend itself against—is disregard.

I'll tell you something: Orphans need an audience. Orphans can't exist, can't seem to exist without somebody to play to and convince by virtue of their acting, that they're real. In effect, when you turn to the Father, you cease engaging in giving attention to the orphan mind-set and the sense of self you had gathered from it before you turned your attention to the Father and leaned into Him and became dependent upon Him, reestablishing consciously a forever-partnership.

So, it is this secret that we must look upon calmly, for the ego cannot protect you against truth, and in ITS presence the ego is dispelled.

You see, none of what we're talking about is a contest, none of what we're talking about is a matter of overcoming anything. It's a matter of abandoning the conscious practice of exercising will to accomplish something in order to become more than you presently are. It's the abandoning of that and all of the ethic involved in it and yielding back into—relaxing back into—the already established way things work, the already established Omnipotence and Omnipresence of God. That will be your experience when you stop fighting against it by trying to accomplish a preference you have different from the movement of Creation itself.

In the calm light of truth, let us recognize that you believe you HAVE crucified God's Son. You have not admitted to this "terrible" secret because you STILL wish to crucify him if you could FIND him.

You see, but the only thing is, that the stronger you apply effort to, and the fuller your intent to become a better and better ego, the more you obscure the Christ that you Are. And so you could say, that the closer you become in your belief to having what it takes to kill the Christ, the more you have obscured the Christ from yourself so that you can't find it. Because your very assertion of being a successful ego is exactly what obscures what you would try to find and kill if you could.

You have not admitted to this “terrible” secret because you STILL wish to crucify him if you could FIND him. Yet the wish has hidden him from you because it is very fearful, and you are AFRAID to find him.

You, the orphan, are afraid to find him. Why? Because if you find the Christ, you know that it will be the end of your orphanhood. It will be the end of your incompetence that God has given you the right and the skill to overcome and therefore to prove your worth.

You have handled this wish to kill YOURSELF by NOT KNOWING who you are, and identifying with something ELSE.

And the something else being the orphan mindset, the collection of beliefs and structures that seem to give you identity that makes sense to you, but understand, that the only reason it makes sense to you is because it is what energizes, motivates you to try harder to become more than you are in order to prove your worth, a worth that you as you as an orphan cannot have because orphans are a figment of the imagination and don't even exist.

Now, let's stand back for a moment. Because when we read this, it's a very awful description, or it can be interpreted to be a very awful description of you—a description that could cause you to throw the book thru a plate-glass window because it's so intolerable. And that's why I said at the beginning, it's well to remember that another way of expressing the word, “ego” is to express it as an “orphan-mindset.” It's very obvious to you that a mindset doesn't encompass all of you. You can actually have two or three mindsets.

A mindset is a collection of ideas, a collection of thoughts, a collection of logical lines of reasoning which seem substantial to you and worthy of your commitment. But you can have many collections of ideas and thoughts and commitments.

When you see that the ego, which has as its intent, the crucifixion of the Christ—of God's Son—when you see that that is just a mindset and not the totality of what you are, you can see that it's something you can abandon.

Now, it isn't that you have awful, destructive, malicious thoughts and motives that it would be hard for you not to feel guilty for, and that it would be hard for you not to feel that you must pay a penalty for, you can see that all of it is part of the structure of a mindset that isn't the totality of you which you can discard. And we've discussed the fact that the discarding of it is simply the way you dispel guilt.

You're not required to do penance for being something you could not be, really. You cannot be required to suffer for believing that you are something that it's impossible for you to be.

The answer is to abandon the belief. The answer is to abandon the belief—not feel bad about the internal structures of that mindset. It isn't that you thought, "I want to kill the Christ of me." It's that you became very careless and disregarded what you were and gave preference to this—Paul's squirming because of the word—because of this mind-fuck you have engaged in. The answer is simply to abandon it. You have fooled yourself into a frame of mind in which everything is so distorted that you're caught by it, you're attracted by it and you're compelled to attempt to cope with it and in coping with it, prove that you are worthwhile.

When the whole thing is pure fantasy—isn't going on, never happened, and it's nothing you can do anything about.

But as long as you are attracted to it, as long as you are addicted to doing something about it, even if it's doing penance so that you might get beyond it, you are doing nothing but continue to mind-fuck yourself. And I'm using the word because "fucking" hurts, and mind-fucking hurts you—it is uncomfortable, it is an unkind act. And to be caught in the belief that you must hang in that mindset and suffer or do penance before you can leave it, is unconscionable. It's untrue.

So as we read about this, recognize that as long as you are finding it difficult to identify yourself as the Christ—the pure innocent direct expression of God at this very moment—you are engaging in covering up the truth about yourself, and the covering up the truth about yourself is going to be uncomfortable because you are being unkind to yourself. But also understand that you are free to abandon it at any moment.

You are free to dispel the illusion and its apparent effects instantaneously by doing one simple thing:

"Father, show me what's true here. Father, be my Father. Father, I'm willing to accept that I am your Son. I'm willing to accept that I am your Daughter, and nothing else. I am willing to be your Son without adding my own

embellishments of meaning to what the Real Meaning of my being your Son or Daughter is. I am willing to abandon the willfulness it takes to try to stand at odds with the fullness of your expression of Yourself as me by wanting to add a little bit more, or torque it a little bit, so that it has a bias to the experience.”

Father, Father, Father is the biggest word in your vocabulary right now in terms of your release from the awfulness that we’ve been reading about which isn’t even real but will seem absolutely real to you and which you will seem to suffer from, through sickness and death and injury and harm until you abandon it. Understand, that indeed, that you will and you are creating unpleasant experiences for yourself. But they aren’t any more real than their author. They aren’t any more real than the orphan that you believe you are.

To become free of orphanhood, say, “Father. . .” And let your attention and your intention reach out beyond the mindset you’ve been employing, as an invitation and a declaration, that you choose not to suffer the illusion of being alone anymore by claiming independence.

You and you and you and you and everyone of you watching . . . and you and you and you and you and you and you are, right now, nothing more and nothing less than God appearing—God being All there Is. And God is not being Himself, tiny, like you seem to be experiencing yourself at the moment. God is being Himself in His Wholeness and that Wholeness is your Birthright to be experiencing right now.

I’m going to put it this way: The experience is occurring right now. It’s not waiting for you after you have refined yourself into it. It is occurring right now. But as I said, you’ve got your blinders on and you’re working very hard not to see it all. And yet it’s all there, your Whole Mind is all there. And all of Creation is experienceable in it right now!

Just say, “Father, thy Will, not mine be done. I don’t want to have anything more to do with my will because my will is covering You up from me and covering up what my brothers and sisters really are from me, and its covering who I am from me and it’s costing me too much!” Start there and persist.

We don’t have to get thru this whole book in order for you to wake up. And you know what? As you can see, the answer is simple. It lies in breaking the independence. And all you have to do to break the independence is to say and mean, “Father. . .”

I love you all. And I don’t care how stubborn you are. I remain with you. And I will remind you that even your stubbornness is part of the orphan mentality that is purely imaginary and therefore, does not absolutely govern you or your experience.

I look forward to being with you next week. Clarification: I look forward to being with you next week in this fashion, but I am very actively with you constantly. And I invite you to say, “Jesus . . . or Raj . . .” Just as I invite you to say, “Father . . .” either way, it breaks the isolation.

I am immeasurably actively present with you as are each of your guides who are fully Awake. The energetic presence of us with you would amaze you. It is so great. Invite us in.

And when you find you’ve started to think and excluded us, don’t kick yourself in the ass, just say again, “Father . . . Raj . . .” Do it over and over. That’s what will begin to undo the habit—the addiction to thinking. Thinking causes you not to experience the Presence of Mind. You’ve heard the phrase in a trying circumstance, “Well, he had the presence of mind to take hold of the situation and handle it well.”

Don’t miss the Presence of Mind that is yours.

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