

A COURSE IN MIRACLES STUDY GROUP WITH RAJ

August 5th 2006

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

Let's go into the *Book* . . . and I'm going to back up momentarily to the previous paragraph.

Much of the ego's strange behavior . . . ¹

. . . or much of the orphan's . . .

. . . strange behavior is directly attributable to its definition of guilt. To the ego, THE GUILTLESS ARE GUILTY.

We discussed this at some length last week and so I will not discuss it at this point. The explanation of this definition is that . . .

Those who do not attack are its "enemies", because, by not valuing its interpretation of salvation, they are in an excellent position TO LET IT GO.

To let what go? The ego. To let go of the state of orphanhood—the mindset of orphanhood. And I did talk about the fact that the one thing the ego cannot defend itself against is disregard.

So, those who disregard the ego are those who aren't hooked by the orphan mindset. Which means they've arrived at a point of not playing into guilt. That's real danger from the ego's standpoint. And so the guiltless are guilty from the ego's standpoint.

They . . .

. . . those who do not attack . . .

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

. . . the presence of truth . . .

. . . the ego is dispelled.

In the calm light of truth, let us recognize that you believe you HAVE crucified God's Son.

Again, you don't believe that you're the Christ right now. Oh, figuratively speaking, you can speak of yourselves as the Sons and Daughters of God, but you can't own it right now. And you won't own it right now. It's like admitting your gay or something—coming out of the closet! Horror of horrors!

. . . 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. Yet the wish has hidden him from you because it is very fearful, and you are AFRAID to find him. You have handled this wish to kill YOURSELF by NOT KNOWING who you are, . .

Now, that doesn't mean that you just decided to do something else. It's a conscious practice of not knowing. You very specifically *do not know* who you are, on purpose. And so, not knowing is something you're practicing.

You have handled this wish to kill YOURSELF by NOT KNOWING who you are, . .

. . . who you truly Are. And that's the way you hide what you truly Are from yourself so that you, whose almighty goal is to be the ultimate presence of power, cannot find who you really Are and kill it.

You have handled this wish . . .

. . . the orphan's wish to be totally something all by itself, which is the . . .

... wish to kill ...

... what you truly Are ...

... by NOT KNOWING who you are, and identifying with something ELSE.

... identifying with and as this definition you've made up of yourself as an independent autonomous entity—an orphan.

You have projected guilt blindly and indiscriminately, but you have NOT uncovered its source. For the ego DOES want to kill you, and if you identify WITH it you must believe ITS goal is YOURS.

If you are insisting, proudly insisting, upon being an orphan who is becoming better and better at being an orphan, you are identifying with that which is a denial of what you truly Are. And you are doing it with gusto. You are doing it with great conscious intent.

Now ...

We once said that the crucifixion is the symbol of the ego. When it was confronted with the REAL guiltlessness of God's Son it DID attempt to kill him, and the reason it gave was that guiltlessness is blasphemous to God.

Hm-m ... the authorities in Rome thought I was claiming to be a greater power than him. Those in the church accused me of being equal to God when I engaged in healing and forgave someone his sins. To be guiltless was blasphemous.

To the ego THE EGO is god, and guiltlessness MUST be interpreted as the final guilt which fully justifies murder.

Do you see that indulging in the idea of being an orphan is utterly destructive, and therefore, should be recognized by all of you to be useless, non-productive, and something to abandon? It isn't just that it's destructive—sort of like an ongoing nuisance that undermines peace and order—it has an ultimate intent. General dissent, or general dissention, general upheaval becomes tolerable to you, and you don't realize that in accepting that, and letting that become tolerable, you are actually accepting the whole ball of wax. And you become subject to the ultimate of that—the exaggerated form of it.

You practice the ultimate form in slow motion, day-by-day ... what? You get a day older. Day-by-day, you get one day closer to what? Your grave. Day-by-

day, this mindset that isn't challenged, kills you slowly. And you accept it slowly. You don't like it, but as I said last week, you don't object to it by doing the one thing that would undo it.

You do not yet understand that all your fear of this course stems ultimately from this interpretation, . . .

. . . that guiltlessness is blasphemous to God . . .

. . . but if you will consider your reactions to it, . . .

. . . to the *Course* . . .

. . . you will become increasingly convinced that this is so.

This course has explicitly stated that its goal for you is happiness and peace. Yet you are AFRAID of it.

You're afraid of this *Course*. You're afraid of what it means. And one of the ways you defend yourself against what it means is to become very intellectual about it. Indeed, the *Course* refers to itself as a thought system and you use it as a thought system—a way to think . . . a way to think, when ultimately the *Course* is leading you away from thinking at all.

You have been told again and again that it . . .

. . . the *Course* . . .

. . . will make you free, yet you react as if it is trying to imprison you.

“Well gee, if I not only do what the *Course* says, but if I do what you, Raj, are actually saying, it means I'm gonna lose the thing that is most important to me: power, authority, strength. I'm going to lose my capacity to be in charge. You, Raj, tell me that I'm not a puppet without strings. You tell me that I am a puppet, either of one voice or the other—the Voice for truth, or the voice for fear.

“This Raj, is not good news. I don't like being told that I'm nothing but a puppet! Yes, I can tolerate the words, ‘You and your Father are One.’ I can tolerate them in theory. It sounds nice, it sounds desirable. But when you tell me that in order to experience my oneness with the Father, I have to abandon all false sense of independence, now you're talking hard stuff.

“You're saying that this means I have to change. That I have to change the whole way I've been being!”

Yes I am. Would you like not to die? Would you like to experience perfection? Would you like to experience invulnerability? Then you're going to have to change the way you're being. You're going to have to decide not to continue to play the role of orphan and the game of orphanhood.

“Well Raj, if I do that, how am I going to function in the world?”

I've said it before, you think that you're going to become an odd-ball, an outcast, and everyone will reject you.

These are the arguments you have against what the *Course* is teaching, against what the truth about you is moving you toward. And it is the way you kill the Christ. It is the way you keep what you divinely Are hidden from you. And it is the way you inexorably walk down the path to the hole in the ground that they will cover over once you're in it.

Is that not justification for changing the way you're being? Do you really want that?

“Oh-h-h, I can deal with it. It's easier to deal with that because everybody else is doing it. It's easier to do that. And besides, I have no proof that what you're saying is true, so nobody is going to think me a fool for not believing you—for not believing what the *Course* is saying. And I'd rather die, and in the meantime have everyone's acceptance of me.”

Whew! [chuckling]

You have been told again and again that it . . .

. . . the *Course* . . .

. . . will make you free, yet you react as if it is trying to imprison you. Most of the time you dismiss it, but you do NOT dismiss the EGO'S thought system.

Oh-h-h, no.

You have SEEN its results . . .

. . . the results of what the *Course* is teaching . . .

. . . and you STILL lack faith in it.

“Oh, I had the most wonderful experience of illumination, in which the things the *Course* is teaching became utterly clear to me and for a week or so after

that, it was like I was on Cloud Nine, and I moved through the world in a whole new way. Ah-h, it was such a wonderful experience.

“But today I have reality to deal with—a crabby neighbor, a difficult employer, challenges that I’ve got to defend myself against. But I’m sure glad I had that moment of illumination. It was a high-point in my life.”

Continuing . . .

You MUST, then, believe that by NOT learning the course you are PROTECTING yourself. And you do not realize that it is only your guiltlessness which CAN protect you.

The Atonement has always been interpreted as the release from guilt, and this is correct if it is understood. Yet even when I have interpreted it FOR you you have rejected it and have NOT accepted it for yourself. You have recognized the futility of the ego and its offerings, but though you do not want the ego you do not look upon the alternative with gladness.

You do not look upon the alternative with gladness. Why? Because of your lust for power. Because of your addiction to the false idea that you can achieve power and that that is your God-given reason for being, and if you abandon that, you will become nothing. And you don’t look upon becoming nothing with gladness.

But you see, there’s a secret that’s being covered up in this whole dastardly process. And the secret is, that as an orphan, as what you think you are at the moment, you *are nothing*. You are nothing, and you can become nothing, and you never will be anything, because *you’re not an orphan!*

[Addressing each one in the group] You’re not an orphan! You’re not an orphan! You, with your eyes closed on the end of the couch, are not an orphan! You are not an orphan! You are not an orphan! You are not an orphan. You, I’m not so sure about [group laughter]. You are not an orphan and you are not an orphan.

Right now, you are not orphans, but you are experiencing a delusion of being orphans—being orphans who can become legitimate presences. That’s the false promise. That’s the carrot that you’re going after, but you’ll never get! And when you get it, you will have proven that your presence is valid . . . but you will never get it.

You have recognized the futility of the ego and its offerings, but though you do not want the ego you do not look upon the alternative with gladness.

Until you're able to look at your fascination with being an ego or an orphan, calmly, in the light of truth, you will not be able to see that all of the promises of egohood or orphanhood are hollow—are empty. There is no fulfillment awaiting you there. And until you're willing to accept that, you will avoid the alternative. You will avoid embracing the alternative with gladness, because you will think there is still hope for you to be what you thought you were going to be able to become.

You are AFRAID of redemption, and you believe it will kill you.

That's because you're looking at it from the orphan's point of view. The minute you discover that you have a Father, and that you are not an orphan, the concept of being an orphan will suddenly become invalid—meaningless. And the orphan, along with all of its concepts and theories, will disappear. The orphan will become the nothing that it is at this very instant. Why? Because you will have regained the direct experience of what you Are.

And so you will not die. You will move from insanity to Sanity, you see, with absolute continuity—without interruption of the experience of conscious Being.

Make no mistake about the depth of your fear. For you believe that, in the presence of truth, you will turn on yourself and destroy yourself.

Why? Again, because from the orphan's mindset, the guiltless must be killed. The guiltless must be annihilated. And so it is inconceivable to you at the moment, to grasp that the revelation of your guiltlessness to you will not cause you to be that which must inevitably be annihilated.

But you see the safety factor here is, that for you to have that experience, that revelation, that shift of perception, the orphan mentality which thinks that the guiltless must be killed, will have vanished, and all that will be left is unalterable eternal life.

Little children, this is not so.

. . . that you will turn on yourself and destroy yourself . . .

Your "guilty secret" is nothing . . .

It's pure imagination, which you make credible simply by believing it and being convinced in your belief. But it still doesn't make it true.

Your “guilty secret” is nothing, and if you will but bring it to the light the Light will dispel it.

There’s that word again. Dispel. It’s like the word, “disillusioned.” “Oh, I became disillusioned.” And you use the word to describe an experience you’re not too happy about. “I thought he was a wonderful guy and I found out different. I became disillusioned.”

Disillusionment is seen as a negative experience, when it means to no longer suffer from delusion. Dispel, likewise, means that the spell that you were under has vanished because you withdrew your belief in it. You *dispel* guilt. You don’t “deal” with it. You come out from under the spell of the orphan mentality that determines guilt to be your natural state and that guiltlessness is not. You come out from under that spell.

How many of you like yourselves? Oh, you know, year in and out, month in and month out. I’m not talking about at this moment. You might say, “Oh, I like myself pretty well,” but month in and month out do you like yourself very well? Well, let me ask you this: If you like yourself, why do you keep thinking that you’ve got to do better and better?

“Be the best that you can be!”

Isn’t that a wonderful slogan? Why? Why be the best that you can be? So that you won’t be the worst [group laughter], or less than what you’re capable of being. Why? Because those who are less than what they can be, are not respectable, are not honored. There’s no payoff in being less than the best.

But I’ll tell you something: Trying to be the best that you can be is going for the carrot, because it is a statement of constant self-dissatisfaction. You practice constant self-dissatisfaction, and trying to be the best that you can be is like trying to deal with guilt by doing penances or devotions. “Oh, I’m going to be the best that I can be by doing the best damn devotions with great piety and religious fervor and sincere desire!”

So you’re gonna end up being one of the best damned orphans there ever was, when the only answer to the whole mess is to discover that you never were an orphan in the first place. And that to try to become better and better keeps you firmly entrenched in the belief that you are, when the *abandonment of the belief* that you are an orphan leaves your mind clear for the influx of the experience of the Christ that you are that is already ultimate because God is what constitutes that Presence, called you.

Now, again, you rely on *not* being the best that you can be. It keeps you safe, because [chuckling] who can expect much from someone who is less than the

best that they can be? It's not reasonable is it, to expect a lot from one who's less than he can be? And so, you're safe. You're safe from what? You're safe from having to be clear. You're safe from being dependably on the mark—meaning one who others can depend upon. After all, if you can be dependably right . . . what if you're wrong? Everybody will know it, because they're all depending on you to be right. You see. And so you're confused. And you fight both sides of the war . . . against yourself.

You are afraid of redemption. To be redeemed is to come back into your right Mind. To be redeemed is to have the perspective of God because you're claiming no right to any other perspective. And you think that that brings with it responsibility, obligation, when being clear is something there's simply no alternative to. To always know the truth is something that there's simply no alternative to.

And so you avoid redemption so that you can avoid responsibility for being utterly right all the time, utterly clear all the time, knowing the truth all the time.

Again . . .

Little children, . . .

. . . that you will turn on yourself and destroy yourself . . .

. . . is not so. Your "guilty secret" is nothing, and if you will but bring it to the light the Light will dispel it. And then no dark cloud will remain between you and the remembrance of your Father, for you will remember His guiltless Son, . . .

. . . and here it's referring to me . . .

. . . who did not die because he is immortal. And you will see that you were redeemed WITH him, and have never been separated FROM him.

In other words, when the truth about me became clear, the truth about you became clear. It wasn't that I, by being redeemed, redeemed you poor souls and some transmogrification occurred, in which you became something more than you had ever been before. Bullshit! When the truth about one is demonstrated, the truth about all is demonstrated. And the only thing that happened was, that ignorance was left behind.

The truth was revealed about *all of us*.

. . . you will see that you were redeemed WITH him, . . .

... with me ...

... and have never been separated FROM him.

... from me. Meaning, even before this redemption occurred. You were never separate from me before, and you haven't been separate from me, after, because it's always been what God is Being.

In this understanding lies your remembering, for it is the recognition of love WITHOUT fear.

[Repeats] ... it is the recognition of Love WITHOUT fear.

Why would it say that? It would say that because right now you don't experience the recognition of love without fear. Always, love is experienced with fear. Why? Because you think love makes you weak. You know the saying, "Nobody likes a good guy." Nobody likes someone who's the essence of love either.

Those who are the presence of love are not really very intelligent because they do not know how to cope with the vicissitudes of life. They don't have what it takes. They don't have the power and the authority it takes to stand up against the awfulness of things. They're sweet, mealy-mouthed creatures. No guts, no substance to them because they don't know how to cope. *You can't cope with love.*

In one way or another, all of you say this in your actions. "You've gotta take hold of the situation! You can't namby-pamby around with love. You've gotta speak up for yourself. And if you have to, you gotta be down and dirty about it."

So, the thought of being imbued with what love really is, is always accompanied with fear because you think that it is going to mean powerlessness—referring to power of the sort that is important to the orphan. Personal power. Authoritative presence. Force. The ability to *exert* force.

Not to have that is fearful. But again, whatever reinforces the value of orphanhood keeps you unconscious of what you Are—keeps you going for a carrot you will never achieve. And you know what? You're in hell now or you're in limbo now, where there's never any forward movement. You're stuck in a repetitive experience of ignorance. And it's not your Birthright! And all you have to do to get out of it, is to break the isolation.

“Oh, I know. But if . . .”—the big word we talked about last week, *Father*. “Do I really want to say, ‘Father’? Who knows what’s going to come if I genuinely say, ‘Father’?” See? Fear of redemption.

I have told you that what will come when you say, “Father. . .” with a recognition that you are speaking to *your* Father, will remind you that you are someone’s Son or Daughter from Whom you get your identity.

When you give your allegiance to a concept of orphanhood, you lose the experience of your identity. And the ongoing mediocrity of your lives, whether you’re wealthy or not, is all the evidence you really need to prove to yourself that you’re not going anywhere. And this is not a successful avenue to traverse. And that it might be a really tremendous relief for you to say and mean, “Father, I want you back in my life, together with my awareness that I am Your Son—that I am not an orphan—and that because I am your Son, I must be something far more wonderful than I thought I could ever be as an orphan. I must be the Christ, and I’m willing to risk whatever might happen, because I’ll tell you, in my no-risk life of mediocrity, *I am not happy*, and I’m willing to opt for a change.”

There will be great joy in Heaven on your homecoming, and the joy will be YOURS. For the redeemed son of man . . .

. . . the orphan . . .

. . . IS the guiltless Son of God, and to recognize him IS your redemption.

Now, you may have heard what I’ve said, or you may go back and read this “in a more grounded way,” you would say, a more sober way, and you might hear it saying awful things about you, and you might have felt that I have been saying awful things about you—that you want to kill the Son of God, that the way you’re using your mind is stupid.

Well, watch out. Because, the tendency tonight may have been, and the tendency this coming week, if you read this over, may be for you to throw out your chest and stand tall, and bring all the vigor of your orphanhood into play and defend yourself. Even if you’re saying, “God, what chance did I have to do anything else than what I’ve been doing? I was given this information from the beginning, so don’t stand there and tell me that I’m full of shit!”

Oh, there’s the proud orphan, reaffirming orphanhood, standing up for itself, saying, “Don’t look so poorly on me. If I could’ve done better, I would’ve done better. So don’t put me down. Give me enough respect to think that if I

could've done better, I would've, because I want to. You think I like this experience I'm in?"

[Big laugh] Oh-h, yes, you have liked it. And the very fact that what we've talked about tonight might bring this reaction up is evidence that you like it, and you feel at home with it, and comfortable with it. And you feel that it is of value because you will be doing this instead of saying, "Ah-h, what a relief this news is. Thank you. Thank you for telling me I don't have to continue on in this awful mediocrity, stuck, never moving forward, even though I continuously try.

"I am grateful to know there is a way out. I am willing to go against my inclination to forever defend myself and reassert myself from my present sense of what I am. And I am willing to allow myself into this place that feels like I will be totally powerless. And I'm willing to change and to be in a new way."

You see? This book . . . it's not about a concept called an ego. It isn't about ideas of truth and ideas of error. It isn't full of wonderful intellectual things to contemplate. This book's about You! You with a capital "Y." The You that You divinely are. The You that it's your Birthright to be experiencing.

You know what? I asked if you liked yourself. You constantly put yourselves down, as I said. One example is, that you're constantly hoping to be better, constantly trying to become better. You're putting yourself down. *And* you engage during the day in constantly putting *each other* down. And that's the way you keep yourself locked into the valuable, meaningful experience of guilt. And it's the way you avoid the experience of guiltlessness.

Stop it!

Be willing to be in your world in a new way. Not so that you can impress anybody. And do it regardless of how others might react. Do it because you no longer want to suffer from the ignorance that is inseparable from this ridiculous idea that you are an orphan, that you are an ego. Do it because you want to be Sane.

And if you are in an insane asylum, your becoming sane shouldn't have anything to do with whether or not the other inmates are happy about it, when their bound not to be happy about it—when, while they are insane, they can't possibly grasp what it means.

There will be great joy in heaven on your homecoming, and the joy . . .

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