

Raj/ACIM Study Group – April 3, 2003

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
Chapter 3 – THE INNOCENT PERCEPTION
Section – ATONEMENT WITHOUT SACRIFICE
And Section – MIRACLES AS TRUE PERCEPTION
First Edition – p. 34 / Second Edition – p. 38

RAJ: Good evening.

AUDIENCE: Good evening.

RAJ: And welcome to everyone who is also joining us on the internet.

Last week I mentioned that each of you is the salvation of the world and that I might ask you how you did in that respect this week. I'm not going to do that. [a little audience laughter] You're off the hook.

But you might ask, "How can I be the salvation of the world? What am I supposed to do?" And the simple answer is you might pray for the world. You might pray for key figures, let us say, in situations occurring in the world. You might pray for a particular part of your body that doesn't seem to be reflecting God or God's Purpose. And then we might ask, "Well, how do you pray? What is the right way to pray?" And actually we've been talking about it for some weeks now.

True prayer is when you abandon what you think you want, what you think you need, when you abandon the thoughts you have about your wants and needs and go within and turn toward the Altar. To what? Inquire of God What The Truth Is. And then listen without interjecting anything in the process. *Listen.*

If it's the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom, which means withhold nothing from you, then you can count on it that any genuine inquiry you extend to God will be answered. The fact is that the answer is always being given. But by virtue of bringing your attention to the point of listening for the answer opens *your mind* to the receipt of the answer.

Now, when you get the answer, when clarification occurs, you can say, "Oh wow! This is a wonderful bit of information." Having received the answer doesn't automatically mean that you embrace the answer and let it change you. So ultimately true prayer, and I said this a number of years ago, is saying "Yes" to God. It's not asking for something. It's not asking God to change a situation or do something for *you*. It's to listen unconditionally, undefendedly within in the quietness of your Being. In other words, turning toward the Altar and desiring to know the Truth. Listening, standing in

receipt of it, and then saying “Yes.” In other words, *agreeing*. Because when you make agreement, you make a commitment. You make commitment.

So, prayer is saying “Yes” to God. What I want to have be unmistakable to every single one of you is that when you say “Yes” to God having inquired, having listened, and having heard, you abandon independence and you join with God, and as I’ve said before, *One* with God is a majority. When there is only one Will finding expression in your partnership with God and it’s God’s Will, there is power. You become an agent for change. It’s not a personal, private power. But it’s the Power of God being unequivocally Himself in all of His Integrity that finds no resistance to its embodiment in you, and so it becomes embodied. It’s spontaneous. It’s automatic. It’s actual.

And so the Brother you wanted to know the Truth about, the kidney, or the heart, or the circulatory system that you wanted to know the Truth about, you know the Truth about and healing results.

Do not... do *not* under any circumstances think that realization of the Truth is something that will only happen in your mind. When it happens in your mind and your mind is not imbued with a sense of personal, private independent authority, the Authority of God is what is embodied. And therefore, God is not blocked from expression. I would encourage all of you at least once a day to sit down to love your world, to want to know the *Truth* about it so that you might say “Yes” to God and have the embodiment of His Will objectively manifested in the world. Because when you bring your undivided *willingness* to Him, *that is what happens*. His Will becomes embodied, and *healing* occurs. What is healing? Healing is the *revealing* of God’s Intent in His Creation, where it had been escaping your attention because you had given your own definitions to it.

So, when the ego suggests to you, “What can you do? You’re just one among billions?”, now you know that you have the capacity to be an agent for change by saying “Yes” to God.

What happens when you turn toward the Altar? You have the Experience of Knowing the Truth, and you have the Experience of the Truth making you free. Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free. Not that you will know *a* truth and rehearse it in your mind, but you will become still enough to inquire of God as to What Truth Is, and in the inspiration, in the infilling of Truth that occurs, you will find yourself knowing it and then you will say “Yes.” And it will be embodied because *that’s the way it works*.

Okay.

SEEKER: Good evening, Raj. Are there other dynamics that might... we might be called to share with the greater body? I speak specifically of life-force, chi coming accumulative to possibly serve the difficulties in the Middle East. A draining of energy, a loss of focus on an individual basis. As we turn to the Altar, can we be called unconsciously to be sharing our life-force, if you will, for healing? Is there a sensation of loss of maybe grounding, not peace, but grounding? Is there another dynamic that might be going on that we might be experiencing but not identifying correctly?

RAJ: Absolutely not. Your question suggests that you are a body.

SEEKER: Part of a body, the body of Christ.

RAJ: But when you speak of *your* energy, you are speaking of a private energy, an energy that's peculiar to you. There's only one Energy and it is Infinite. It is the Energy of *Spirit*, and the Energy of Spirit is Love. And Love is God. Love is Infinite. And that Energy can't be spent. You cannot be depleted. And when you're joined with the Father, you no longer have a sense of private, separate beingness that can be energized or depleted. You don't need to call the energy chi, or anything else. It's Love—plain, pure and simple. Love is the Substance of Everything. Everything you are experiencing is pure Energy, whether you call it glass, or carpet, or skin, it's Energy. It is Spirit, not matter. And the Substance of It is Love embodying *perfectly* what the Father is being right there in the Movement of Being Creation.

So, no. You will not find yourself becoming ungrounded at all, or depleted in any way, unless... unless you decide that having turned toward the Altar and having gotten filled up with quote “the Truth,” you turn your back to the Altar and try to take it out to everyone you see who needs the Truth, without realizing that the reason they “*need the Truth*” is because *you* are looking at them on your *own*, still with your own definitions, and seeing them through the lens of fear, because you cannot have your back to the Altar without experiencing fear and without misinterpreting everything you see.

Many individuals play with the idea that turning to the Altar is like dipping a candle into wax in the process of making a candle. And you dip it in, and then you pull it out of the wax and let the new coating harden and the candle is more than it was before. And so they dip themselves in Love and Truth, and then they come out from it and they bring to those poor souls that they see, which they see because they're not looking with God. Then they will find themselves depleted and will need to go back for another dip. You see?

No. When you put leaven in bread and it performs its function, it doesn't wear itself out. And a little bit of leaven leavens the whole Brotherhood. A little bit of Love experienced unequivocally and without bias and admitted to, embraced, blesses the whole Brotherhood. And it doesn't deplete you at all because it's not a personal possession of a particular form occupying a certain amount of space. You see?

SEEKER: Thank you.

RAJ: You are welcome.

SEEKER: Could I just add a.... Many I've spoken with are experiencing a floating, overwhelming reaction to what's going on. Not knowing maybe the Truth, that's the problem. Is this sensation the turning away from the Altar? Is this kind of..

RAJ: It happens when you try to gather the facts of being from the way things appear when you have your back to the Altar. Yes.

SEEKER: So a sensation of turning your back to the Altar, the...

RAJ: That is correct.

SEEKER: Thank you.

RAJ: Yes, you must watch for the tendency to become infatuated with the awfulness of things. Your movies, your television programs have conditioned you to "enjoy" (in quotes) *the stimulation of violence*—car crashes, explosions, wild hair-raising chases, cars flipping over and over, things that cannot even happen in real life. And there is an infatuation with *stimulation*.

Right now you could say that there is a lot of quote "reality TV" unquote being broadcast on your televisions. And it is quite stimulating because it's "real." It's not pre-recorded. It's not staged. It's quote "real life" unquote. And it's a rather violent, and in that sense, visually stimulating experience. If you are going to try to gather the facts of being from what is presented, you are going to experience ungroundedness. You are going to find yourself blown emotionally one way and then another because you don't have an anchor. And the only way you're going to find an anchor is if you pull back from your infatuation and your tendency to find out what's going on, in other words, gather the facts of being from what you're seeing, so that in the quietness within you, you might inquire, "What is really going on here?", so that you're not stimulated by the definitions you've given to everything or that you've been *taught* to see.

What you will see on the TV is a call for Love, a call for the Conscious Experience of Truth *in you*. When you recognize that's what it is, then turn away from the TV and go within so that you might *know* the Truth, agree with It, make commitment to It and be out from that clarity within you.

Okay. We will begin in the *Text*.

READER: *The innocence of God is the true state of the mind of His Son. In this state your mind knows God, for God is not symbolic;...*

RAJ: If God was symbolic you could only think about God, or have an opinion about God. But in this state of mind, in this state your mind *knows* God. It's a direct experience. And not only that. The experience reveals to you that it is your natural state of being. So you have learned from *knowing* God that *You are the Presence of God* when you get your personal little sense of yourself out of the way and let Him be all there is right where you are.

Continue.

SEEKER: Should I read that sentence again?

RAJ: Yes.

READER: *In this state your mind knows God, for God is not symbolic; He is Fact. Knowing His Son as he is,...*

RAJ: Meaning that now that you've experienced yourself as you are and have had this insightful, inspirational revelation.

Go on.

READER: *Knowing His Son as he is, you realize that the Atonement, not sacrifice, is the only appropriate gift for God's altar, where nothing except perfection belongs.*

RAJ: Or can be.

Continue.

READER: *The understanding of the innocent is truth. That is why their altars are truly radiant.*

RAJ: Their Altars are truly radiant because they're not introducing anything that covers up and dims the radiance.

Continue.

READER: *Miracles as True Perception*

I have stated that the basic concepts referred to in this course are not matters of degree. Certain fundamental concepts cannot be understood in terms of opposites. It is impossible to conceive of light and darkness or everything and nothing as joint possibilities. They are all true or all false. It is essential that you realize your thinking will be erratic until a firm commitment to one or the other is made.

RAJ: And this is why I said that prayer is saying “Yes” to God. Until you say “Yes” to God, your thinking will be erratic, ungrounded, rudderless.

READER: *A firm commitment to darkness or nothingness, however, is impossible. No one has ever lived who has not experienced **some** light and **some** thing. No one, therefore, is able to deny truth totally, even if he thinks he can.*

RAJ: Now, if you’re the direct Expression of God, the Son or Daughter of God, and you have chosen to have a daydream, you have chosen to use your imagination to conceive of something that God has not created. You can create for yourself a fantasy, a daydream, and in this daydream you can imagine that you are not connected with God. You can imagine that you are an independent free agent. But you know what? You couldn’t have this fantasy without being the direct Expression of God. Something real about you has to be engaged in the fantasy, in creating the fantasy. So no matter how definite you become about seeing yourself as independent from God, you have to use your God-given ability to be conscious to do it. You see? So there’s no way for you to become totally ignorant of God. There’s no way for you to not be experiencing some of What Truth Is. You see?

ANOTHER SEEKER: Mm hmm.

RAJ: Continue.

READER: *Innocence is not a partial attribute. It is not real **until** it is total. The partly innocent are apt to be quite foolish at times. It is not until their innocence becomes a viewpoint with universal application that it becomes wisdom.*

RAJ: This is not to say that spurts of the experience of innocent are not valuable. It just means that you are apt to be quite foolish at times and at other times you are apt to be quite wise. And the moments of wisdom that you experience reveal to you more of What Is True of you so that it becomes easier for you to think of yourself in that more enlightened way and thus give more frequent permission.

Continue.

READER: *Innocent or true perception means that you never misperceive and always see truly. More simply, it means that you never see what does not exist, and always see what does.*

RAJ: Yes. I'm going to share with you a statement that will help to make things clearer here. The statement is that, "I, Jesus, beheld the perfect man where sinning mortal man appeared to mortals." In other words, where those whose backs were to the Altar were seeing sinning mortal men, the Sons and Daughters of God, but seeing them as sinning mortal men, he saw the perfect man because he (I) did not have my back to the Altar *and* this correct view of man healed the sick, was transformational.

I bring this out to tie it in with my opening statements as to *how* you can be the salvation of the world. When you see the Truth where erroneous delusional experiences seem to be going on, the result is healing. And it's your job to make the choice for that. It's your work to make the choice for that. It's your *nature* to do that naturally. And all I'm trying to do is help inspire you to come back into that which is natural to you, even though it seems to you like an effort.

How will you arrive at a point where you never see what does not exist and always see what does? Only by having come to a point where you choose only to see what does truly exist, turning to God for the vision, standing in receipt of it and saying "Yes" to it, making commitment to Truth.

It's interesting, you can't come back into your Right Mind until you're willing to see your world truly. You see that? You can't wake up without blessing the world. You can't see truly until you care enough about your fellowman to want to know the Truth about him so that you're no longer confused. Isn't that a wonderful way for salvation and Atonement to be set up? It's impossible for it to be an act of selfishness. Waking up requires that you join with your Brother on your Brother's behalf, witnessing for your Brother or Sister. And it's so simple. You could call it an exquisite, divine mechanism.

Continue.

READER: *When you lack confidence in what someone will do, you are attesting to your belief that he is not in his right mind.*

RAJ: Again, when you lack confidence in what someone will do, you are attesting to *your* belief that he is not in his Right Mind. You are making commitment to your belief, which means you are not even in relationship with him. You're having your own private experience in which you are *pretending* that you're having a relationship.

ANOTHER SEEKER: Is that because you assume something before it happens?

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: Okay. You're judging it before it even happens because you don't know.

RAJ: That is correct. But you're also choosing to come to a conclusion without ever connecting with your Brother. And in not connecting with your Brother, you're withholding yourself from a relationship. And it's only in relationship that caring can occur.

Continue.

READER: *This is hardly a miracle-based frame of reference.*

RAJ: Indeed. And that sentence should cause some laughter to come from you. [slight scattered audience laughter] This is *hardly* a miracle-based frame of reference.

Continue.

READER: *It also has the disastrous effect of denying the power of the miracle.*

RAJ: Yes. Because there's no joining. There's not enough *caring* to *connect* and having a real experience of relationship before coming to a conclusion. And because you are having confidence in what the other one will do based on *your own judgments*, you're not available to relate to him or her based on what the Father has revealed to you about him or her. And you do not have available to you the Love that the Father has for him or her to be inspired by yourself to the point of overflowing so that it's extended to your Brother or your Sister. And without that, there's no miracle.

Continue.

READER: *The miracle perceives everything as it is. If nothing but the truth exists, right-minded seeing cannot see anything but perfection.*

RAJ: Right. If nothing but the Truth exists. Well, nothing but the Truth *does* exist. I keep saying that you are confronted always and only by the Kingdom of Heaven because there's nothing else going on and therefore there is nothing else in your face. If you want to see the Kingdom of Heaven that's going on, you're going to have to abandon your commitment to the definition you've given to it, and inquire and be infilled, and then say "Yes" to the infilling. You have to actually do something to get past the definitions you've been employing.

Continue.

READER: *I have said that only what God creates or what you create with the same Will has any real existence. This, then, is all the innocent can see. They do not suffer from distorted perception.*

RAJ: Yes. And wouldn't it be wonderful if you were able to think about yourselves as innocents (c-e-n-t-s), in innocence, ones who are innocent. Well, not looking at you through your eyes, I see that you are all innocent. Because no matter what you think, you *really haven't* succeeded at being more or less than What God Is Being right where each one of you is right at this moment.

Love is the willingness to recognize that which is Real in each and every thing, that which is Divinely Real. Are you willing to see That Which Is Real in everyone you know? It requires a willingness to Love. Are you really willing to Love everyone you know?

ANOTHER SEEKER (Reader): I believe that I am. However, I just believe that I am, and here comes a "yes but." And this is my experience of my birthright and my experience of the birthright that everyone in this room and everyone who's listening, everyone in the world, *but* my own habits of thinking, my own reactions, my own fears, my own sense of judgment of the situation or any situation is a cloud. So... that's not good.

RAJ: And so all of you, all of you do have individuals in your life that you have reluctance to be willing to Love. Well, you need healing from that. So for *yourself*, for yourself be willing to ask the Father to show you the Truth about that one so that *you* aren't blocked from being able to extend and embody God's Love more clearly in the world.

"Oh, but I've been hurt too much by that one. And blah, blah, blah."
[audience amusement] But you know what? When you're blocking your capacity to embrace with Love, you are causing a hurt *in* yourself all by yourself and you need to be free of that.

You know what? Right where every single individual is, is a Divine One so beautiful and so perfect and so much the Embodiment of Love that you deserve to be experiencing it even if that one doesn't know it about himself or herself yet.

You know what? If you're going to be the salvation of the world, you've got to be willing to anchor God in the world by choosing to get past your unwillingness to see the Truth there. "Well, if I do that and I become defenseless, I'll just get hurt again." No. Being filled with Love and the Vision of the perfection of your Brother or Sister does not cause you to

become ungrounded, foolish, or stupid. And so, if your Brother or Sister continues to behave as though they are not the perfection you see, you will recognize it. And without judging them for it, you will not cooperate with their point of view. And so you will not get hurt again, and you will not find yourself used. And because you know the Truth, you will stick with it with commitment. And that commitment on behalf of your Brother or Sister will constitute a witnessing for them that *will* cause yielding to the Truth to occur in them. And if it takes a while, it won't bother you because it's your pleasure to give *them* the true perception of them over and over and over again until they finally get it.

Okay. Let's continue.

ANOTHER SEEKER: I have a statement. What I've noticed in my own life that has gotten in the way before of wanting to fully know and to fully love another person is all the little fears: fears of losing something, fears of the form of the relationship changing, fears of appearing foolish or thinking that you would appear foolish or that somehow you would be attacked, or all those... all those little fears that come from the sense of the little "I." The little, you know, person that's, you know, split off.

RAJ: The self it feels like you are when you have your back turned toward the Altar.

SEEKER: Yes. Correct. And I notice in my own life as I stop being afraid of losing something, as that becomes less important to me than being aligned with God...

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: ...as I stop being *afraid*, then it becomes irrelevant to me if the person chooses to walk away, or chooses to react however they react to my standing with the *Truth*. It's almost like I develop an endless *patience* that comes with the *Love* and not being afraid what the form may or may not look like as a result of what I put forth.

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: It's not being afraid any more. Not being afraid of things changing. Not being afraid of losing somebody.

RAJ: And being free of the fear, your capacity to on the spot respond with the clarity of God's Mind, will allow you to be utterly appropriate. And so, if someone is leaving and it's not appropriate for them to leave, you will be able to express the clarity of what the Father's *Will* is in that circumstance. In other words, to not be afraid of form changing, to not be afraid of someone abandoning you or leaving doesn't mean that you will say "yes" to

everything that happens. But in the absence of the fear, God's Grounded Clarity and your having a Divine Rudder will allow you to say "Good-bye" or "Wait a minute!"

SEEKER: Mm hmm. But it all comes from being aligned so you know how to respond.

RAJ: Exactly. Exactly.

READER: *You are afraid of God's Will because you have used your own mind, which He created in the likeness of His Own, to miscreate.*

RAJ: There you go. You see? The Son or Daughter of God has to be present and Real in order for you to miscreate a fantasy that you can commit yourself to and thereby enter into a state of apparent insanity. But all the time that which is energizing it is something utterly Real—the Son or Daughter of God That You Are.

Continue.

READER: *The mind can miscreate only when it believes it is not free. An "imprisoned" mind is not free because it is possessed, or held back, by itself.*

RAJ: Indeed. By *itself*.

Continue.

READER: *It is therefore limited, and the will is not free to assert itself. To be one is to be of one mind or will. When the Will of the Sonship and the Father are one, their perfect accord is Heaven.*

RAJ: Ah. There's your definition of Heaven. *When the Will of the Sonship and the Father are One, their perfect accord is Heaven.* And that perfect accord is what you experience as being embodied and so it is what you experience as a healed world, as a healed body, as harmony and peace on earth. That's not the ultimate, but that's an unavoidable step in the process of waking up. And it's why I keep homing in on the fact that [laughing] it is part of the insanity to think that you can become spiritually clear without having the manifestation of healing.

SEEKER: So if you don't have the manifestation of healing, then you weren't clear.

RAJ: That is absolutely correct. Absolutely correct. Write that down and put it on your refrigerator, because until you... until you accept *that*, your spirituality is ungrounded.

SEEKER: Okay. So in an example of a personal relationship with someone, if you see a call for Love and you ask to see the other truly, and then you respond, while you're turning towards the Altar you respond, there would have to be a *healing* manifested.

RAJ: That is correct.

SEEKER: So if you continue to see a call for Love, then you didn't get it.

RAJ: That is correct.

SEEKER: Okay. [laughing] Okay, I got that. [laughing]

RAJ: Yes.

ANOTHER SEEKER: Okay, so this is what I notice. First there's an upsettedness. So someone says something or does something or whatever, and you feel your button pushed. Okay then time goes, you know, so then you may, you know, what happens sometimes if it *really* gets pushed, you may just be in that hurt for a while. "Oh! I've been, you know. This is such an injustice, et cetera, et cetera." Then that passes and you say, "Oh, I see what happened. It's just... it's just an ego trick." And so you turn to the Father and you say, "Father, help me to see this the way You see it." And then you be quiet and nothing. There's no infilling. There's no answer to it. There's no response. There's no transformation there. So from there, there's two ways to go. You can just keep sitting there until it becomes impractical, I guess, to sit there any longer. Or you can wait until... until another time when you can go back and say, "Father, I still don't feel healed from that last situation. Help me to see, to see how You see it." And so this is the process, correct?

RAJ: Indeed.

SEEKER: You just keep... the perseverance just has to keep being there and you just keep going back again and again and again for thousands and thousands of years. [laughing] [audience laughter]

RAJ: For however long it takes!

SEEKER: [simultaneously] ...long it takes!

RAJ: It's like straightening teeth. You put the braces on and they keep pressuring for the movement into alignment. And the pressure is persistent. And as movement occurs, new pressure is applied for further movement. And so you must persist. You must persist in fulfilling your Reason for Being. And the only reason you seem to need to persist is because you're out of the habit of being the Presence of Love, and you're heavily into the habit of being the presence of judgment.

SEEKER: And so, you know, we've spoken about the bottom of the barrel, being at the bottom of the barrel. Well, this is a little different from being at the bottom of the barrel because what it is, is you recognize that other ways don't work. I mean you've been down that road *so many* times before, that it doesn't work to get involved in this ego-dynamic bullshit that just keeps spinning you out. So you have to be persistent. And you keep going back. And guess what, Raj? That's not fun. [single audience laugh]

RAJ: You and I have talked about that before.

SEEKER: That's a cooker. You're in the pressure cooker, and you just... I mean you're sizzling. You're just... you're there because you're neither... you're neither answered, or... or and you're not in your ego and you're not, you know what I mean? Maybe you are in your ego, but you recognize that you're... that's no way... that's nowhere to live your life.

RAJ: That's correct.

SEEKER: And yet you're not... you're not... you're like in nowhere land, in like...

RAJ: But the reason you're there is simple. It's because you're all stubborn. [some audience laughter]

SEEKER: So there's a surrender that needs to happen there, a letting go of the way you were. But the thing is...

RAJ: Surrender is absolutely essential. And what makes it seem to take time is your unwillingness to abandon your stubbornness. And many of you may think that you have very little of a stubborn streak in you and it's when you find out how long it takes to hear the Father's Voice that you discover the degree of stubbornness. But, you know what? The opportunity will keep presenting itself to you...

SEEKER: Oh, I know that.

RAJ: ...and wearing you down.

SEEKER: Right. The other thing, too, is, you know, you're always saying in your head, "Well, I'm willing. I certainly am willing!" But that's a head trip. [scattered audience laughter] You're not willing. It's gotta be in... deep... deep down inside. It's gotta be a shift that you can... that's palpable, that you can feel in your gut shifting. So uh...

RAJ: Michael, what can I say? [audience laughter]

SEEKER: I don't know. What can I say? [more audience laughter]

RAJ: You've got the point.

This book I'm holding in my hand, *A Course in Miracles*, is umpteen hundred pages of what you just talked about. [some audience laughter] And until each of you is willing to persist in yielding, that absolutely horrible word "yielding," until you actually do that, which isn't fun, you're still stuck no matter how *well* you can talk the *Course*. But I have to remind you that it's your nature to do this awful thing. It's your nature to yield. It's utterly natural to you and you aren't going against your nature by doing it. You're going against your ego conditioning, but you're not going against your nature. And so you have the support of the Universe behind you in doing it. And so you're assured of success.

SEEKER: If feeling helpless is the first step, then I've taken that one. That's for sure. I don't know what else to say. I mean I guess... I guess I'm on the right track. It's just that a... when you come to this point, it's just a... limbo. What can I say?

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: Oh, there no more limbo I realize, that was abolished recently but nevertheless that's what I feel. Like maybe I was...

RAJ: Feeling helpless, feeling incompetent is just the first step. The *reason* for that experience is to cause you to say "Help!", to reach out, *truly* reach out to God. The first step is the realization, "I of myself can do nothing." But you can get stuck there.

SEEKER: And then, you know, anger and frustration can come in, too. Just like a little kid.

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: You know.

RAJ: And sidetrack you for a little longer. But you get to that point which is essential and then you must take the next step and say, "Help!" You much reach out.

SEEKER: Okay. Thanks.

RAJ: There's another word that goes along with this. It's another one of those *awful* words, "repentance." All repentance means is that you're willing to change. But you will not arrive at a point of being willing to change until... until you realize that your stubbornness has done nothing but create permanent grief for you, and you want to choose again. You realize you can do nothing of yourself. You get over being mad about it and you ask for help. And then you say "Yes" to the help you receive. And that's repentance. It's just you coming back into your Right Mind. These aren't

really terrible words, and the meanings aren't terrible. It's just you becoming sane again.

ANOTHER SEEKER: So, I'm having a similar experience. What's happening for me is I've made my commitment, and I know there's no way out. And I do have enough... enough evidence that there is a God and that He's working in my life. And so when I want to value how quickly the change is happening, instead of doing that, I relax and I trust. And I'm finding that even though I might not be changing any faster than Michael, I'm not nearly as uncomfortable because I got faith that the change is happening in good time and I just sort of rest there. I mean, I'm not thinking that I'm getting results any faster, but I'm not uncomfortable.

RAJ: Okay.

ANOTHER SEEKER: You know, I'm listening to this and I'm resonating with myself and I know there's got to be a shift here somewhere where it becomes a matter of Love. I mean where... where... I'm hearing it's like it's a chore—we've got to do this. But it really isn't. This is a Love affair which takes precedent over everything in our lives.

RAJ: But you see, the Love affair, the subject of Love, can't really be talked about...

SEEKER: I know. [softly]

RAJ: ...until the experience of helplessness has been arrived at, and the element of stubbornness has been gotten past. One has to arrive at a point where struggling and pain and misery that have been brought about by stubbornness are no longer experienced as being valuable. And there's something *in you* that wants to make a different choice.

SEEKER: Does that... does that...

RAJ: That willingness or desire to make a different choice, you could say, is the first glimmering of self Love, with a capital "L".

SEEKER: Okay. Would the chore then still be the holdout that you still think you can do it your way?

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: Okay. So there's still a little...

RAJ: That's the stubbornness.

SEEKER: That's the stubbornness. Okay. I wanted to be clear on that.

RAJ: Yes. I want all of you to be very practical and very real. And I'm not hanging crepe here, but don't try to gloss over the work. Don't try to find different words to use that make it sound easier. Because abandoning old habits must be done *consciously and conscientiously by choice*. And so I don't want you to get too flowery about it. I don't want you to be depressed about it either just because it's work. But if you know that there's work involved, you will arrive at a point where you love yourself enough to *engage in the effort*. The effort to what? The effort to make distinctions between Truth and error, Good and evil, and make the choice for Truth and Good, and actually break old habits.

When you are able to distinguish between Truth and error and make the choice for Truth, you find that instead of being blown about like a will-of-the-wisp, you now have a rudder. And the amount of effort you have to put forth to stay on track when you have a rudder is far less than the amount of effort you have to put forth when you're being blown about like a will-of-the-wisp and are having to try stay on track without a rudder. And so, when you're willing to become practical enough and grounded enough to make these distinctions with commitment, you find that there's a new level of order and harmony that are accompanied by conscientiousness.

Conscientiousness could be called effort or work. But you have a natural capacity to stand with the Truth, and that's what conscientiousness is.

So I encourage you to avoid words like "a Love affair" and "it's all about Love." I'm not putting you down, but I'm trying to save you time. Because if you're looking for something *wonderful* about it, you will tend to miss the wonder of the discovery of your capacity to be divinely conscientious, forever standing at the post, forever making the distinction, because it's natural to you to be doing nothing else but recognizing the Truth and protecting it. Protecting it by never again indulging in infatuation with error. You see what I'm saying? Okay.

SEEKER: I have a question. I've noticed that making distinctions and saying "Yes" to God means that you also have to be willing to change. And I think that that is the *hook* that sometimes comes that... where we practice faithlessness. And we think that change means that we're being led to something *worse* than what we have, I think is where the stubbornness comes in. I've noticed in my own life, being more willing to change, because sometimes saying "Yes" to God means, you know, a change in circumstance, or a change in behavior, or a change in response, whatever. It's like you have to be flexible. And to know...

RAJ: And sometimes it means staying right where you are and being in a new way.

SEEKER: Yes. That's right. But I think that's where the development of trust comes in because I've noticed that the more that I say "Yes" to God, the more that I'm willing to change and go with the flow, the more that I realize that I am being led to something better. And so with time, with the continued effort, I'm recognizing that I'm becoming stronger, that I'm more grounded. It's paying off. From experience I'm noticing it's paying off. And I could see how sometimes the... early on in the process, there's a lot more fear to making distinctions which would then lead to saying "Yes" which would then lead to... because of the change, because...

RAJ: That is correct.

SEEKER: ...because the ego likes to suggest that change means change for the worst.

RAJ: Exactly. Exactly.

Yes.

ANOTHER SEEKER: I'm sorry. I feel like I've been experiencing this and I've finally got past the big chunk of letting go and it's... and it's... it's like letting habits... the habits that don't get you anywhere. You think they're getting you somewhere, but they really don't go anywhere; dead end street. I finally somehow got the willingness to let some of that go and just say, "Okay. I'm all Yours. You show me what to do." I don't have to make any more decisions. I don't have to do anything except hone in, and then...

RAJ: Except that you have to say "Yes."

SEEKER: Yes.

RAJ: And make commitment to it and that is a decision. But that is something you will do anew daily.

SEEKER: I feel like that's happening.

RAJ: You are correct.

SEEKER: And it is a very wonderful feeling, and it encourages you to keep going. You want more and more. And it feels like everything is expanding and making more sense when it's less scary. Right?

RAJ: And, at the very same time, you are exercising less control than you ever have before without becoming stupid or truly foolish.

SEEKER: Quite the opposite actually.

RAJ: Yes. Exactly.

SEEKER: Thank you.

RAJ: Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free, for God knows what. For what you don't want to imagine because what you would imagine will be far less than what the Father's gifting you with. And when in any given moment you ask the Father, "What is Truth?" and you experience Truth, as I said last week, don't assume that today's illumination will be sufficient to illuminate tomorrow. Because you want the direct Experience of Truth in its ever-freshness moment by moment by moment eternally.

So do understand that listening to the Father, listening for the Father's Will and saying "Yes" to it will mean that you will never be able to peg anything. You will never have it under your belt so that you will never have to listen again because you've got it. *Being* means forever getting it *fresh*. And just remember this. Forever getting it fresh is going to be evidenced as healing, as the salvation of the world, the uncovering of the Kingdom of Heaven where you had been seeing the world. And so it's with each other and with *all* of the Brotherhood that the Love of God comes into play and expression and embodiment, and the revelation of What Truth Is in every single relationship. And remember, you not only have relationships with each other, you have relationships with the flowers, and the trees and the animals, and everything.

RAJ: Is everyone enjoying the *Course*?

ANOTHER SEEKER: Absolutely.

RAJ: It is a wonderful trigger of the movement from head to heart, from having one's back to the Altar to turning toward the Altar, to wanting to know the Truth and inquiring as to What Truth Is. Not for uses you would put it to, but to know What God Is Being so that you might be let in on the secret, the very public *infinite manifestation of Creation* that you've been missing out on because you've insisted on using your own private definitions, thus making [laugh] the universal publicness of God's Being a secret kept from you!

The process will take effort in the sense that distinctions will need to be made. Commitments will have to be made. Persistence will have to occur. Dedication. You see? But having these is your Birthright. You could say it's programmed into you already. It's on your hard drive. You just haven't opened the programs up for a while. It's all there.

I love you. Remember to love each other enough to want to know the Truth about each other, and then turn to God for the revelation of it.

Okay. I look forward to seeing you next week.

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