

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

STUDY GROUP

WITH RAJ

August 25th 2007

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

There is a lesson in the Course that says, *Above all else, I want to see.*¹

At the bottom line, this is the impulse everyone feels every moment of existence. Existing, for lack of better words, at this point, is an embodiment of the desire to see. Another way of putting it is, a desire to understand—a desire to comprehend. *Above all else I want to see.*

The next Lesson adds a little bit of the punch to it: *Above all else I want to see differently.*²

You could say, that as babies and as toddlers and children, you all wanted to see and everything was a different seeing. Differentness was constantly your experience and you were fresh to embrace what was different. And you did not try to get everything to fit into the perspective you had the day before. That came as you got older.

Above all else I want to see. And above all else. . . , now that you're grown up, you have to add, "I want to see differently. I want to see minus my conditioned responses to what I see. I want to see beyond my best judgments about everything."

And then we have the prayer, words of Mine which Paul turned into a prayer that was discussed at the last Gathering in December. *I want to see everything through your Vision.* This is a prayer to Me. "I wish to see—I want to see everything through your Vision, and I'm adding the word, Jesus, which is your Gift to me from God."

Now this is a little bit more intimate and personal expression of what you find in the Book of John in the Bible that says, *Let that Mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*³ It's more intimate and personal because you're saying to me, "I want to see everything through your Vision which is your gift to me from God." My Gift to you from God.

What you need to become free of are the definitions you each have put into place, either all by your original little self or along with the help of others—teachers—parents, who taught you definitions which you accepted, and once they were in place, caused you to stop looking with innocent eyes—caused you to stop looking with curiosity to wonder if there's more here in this glass of water (holds up glass of water) than what you're used to seeing; two different forms of matter. But wait a minute, but maybe... maybe... it's two different experiences of the energy of Spirit—the Presence of God. A holy encounter with That which is divine. Ah... now you have reason to be curious.

And I am asking you, I am encouraging you, I am inviting you to go through your day every day with this attitude: "Above all else I want to see the more... above all else—above all else that I'm engaged in at the moment in my daily life, I want to see differently—I want to see the more that is there." And ultimately, the element that is essential that gets you out of your private arrogant independent sense of self—that's quite capable of doing everything quite well without any help. And that is, "...above all else, I want to see everything through your Vision" Ah...abandoning isolation. Joining, cooperating with an acknowledgement of: "...which is your Gift to me."

"Um...something I didn't originate. It's Your gift to me. Insulting as it is, You're asking me to let something in that I didn't originate and I can't take credit for. And you're telling me that this might be life-changing, that this might be transformational. I'm not sure I want transformation that doesn't occur at my hand—thank you very much, even if you are Jesus. If you were really Jesus you would show me how to do this by myself."

You wouldn't ask Me to do something that is insulting to Me. You wouldn't ask Me to do something that is demeaning to Me. You wouldn't ask me to do something that would put Me in second place subservient to something else.

But, this Gift to you is a Gift given to Me by God to give to you.

"Well, that's a very heavy duty convincing argument, Jesus. When you put it that way, it makes it hard for me to discount it offhandedly. But I'm going to. I'm going to put it off until I feel more like doing this thing."

Now last week, I suggested that all of you stop thinking of yourselves as students of *A Course In Miracles*—students of the words in a book. But you know what? I do want you to take the ideas and be willing to act upon them. I do want you to take the

ideas that we're talking about right now and act upon them by being willing, in spite of your reluctance—in spite of your desire to continue a little longer with your independence, to risk the chance that wanting to see through—like through a pair of binoculars—through My Vision; to risk the chance that looking at everything through My Vision, which is My Gift to you from God, will annihilate sin, disease and death; which will annihilate vulnerability; which will uncover to you your incapacity to be hurt—harmed—damaged. To risk the chance that if you actually were willing to join with me and see through My Vision and abandon your autonomy, that war will end—that all kinds of in-harmony will end. And, that whether it's this piece of paper, or this glass, or that sound, it's a divine event embodying the fullness of the perfection of the Love that God is Be-ing. That it is an awesome event that will be far from dull—that will be more satisfying than the word “satisfaction” has ever meant to you before.

Would you like to levitate, would you like to fly, would you like to be able to move from one place to another instantly? And I don't just mean from one place on your planet to another but from one place in the infinitude of Being to another. Are any of those things worth abandoning your autonomy for? You think autonomy is synonymous with individuality. Individual individuality, you think has a boundary or it wouldn't be individuality. But I want you to think of it this way—here is a way you might be able to conceive of it:

If you were standing where Paul is, or if you were sitting where Paul is, and you had a view of the entire universe from this position in the universe, that could be called an experience of individuality. If you were to be sitting where Michael is sitting about five feet away from Paul, observing the whole universe, that would be like individuality. And yet, all that would constitute the difference would be, for lack of better words, the perspective—the vantage point.

Individuality is not a private thing. (repeats) Individuality is not a private thing. It has nothing to do with autonomy. You will not lose individuality by abandoning the idea, that you, like Paul sitting in the chair, are in the middle of a whole universe, but not the whole universe yourself.

My point is this: When you abandon autonomy, your individuality can become an all-inclusive universal experience. That's not loss, that's gain.

Now, this chapter is called . . .

From Perception to Knowledge⁴

Perception is constituted of the definitions you all have made up about everything. Perception is what you have determined this glass is. But what this glass is can be known, not just perceived as this definition or that definition. “Oh well, it's a pretty

glass, it's actually, more properly defined, it's a glass mug—it's an attractive mug but not nearly as attractive as some I've seen."

You have definitions, perspectives, perceptions that have nothing to do with the fact that this exists. And I'll tell you something: Seen truly, it is as awesome as the glass that you would call an ugly glass. Awesome, because its substance is Living Love. It is alive. It is God expressing Himself there.

So how do you move from a perception of a glass to the experience of Knowing the glass? That's what this chapter is about. So let's begin.

All therapy . . .

Oh dear, doesn't sound like much fun does it?

All therapy is release from the past.

All therapy is release from the past. Well, that's not quite so bad is it? (chuckling) Because one can release the past by means of a simple choice. If making the choice requires encouragement, then it could be called therapy. But . . .

All therapy is release from the past. That is why the Holy Spirit is the only therapist. He teaches that the past does not exist. A fact which belongs to the sphere of knowledge . . .

. . . not perception.

A fact which belongs to the sphere of knowledge, and which therefore no-one in the world knows.

(whispering) no-one in the world knows. Makes it sound like that faulty thing I wrote—that's a world that doesn't exist? And you know that the past does not exist is fact which belongs to the sphere of knowledge and which therefore no-one in the world knows.

Well, it all depends on where you're looking at the world from as to whether you are in it or not. If you're in the world, you're in the definitions you've made up about the world:

"Oh, this is a rough part of town". . . "Oh, this is a great part of town". . . "The people here you don't have to worry about". . . "The people here you really have to be careful about!"

But someone who isn't in their definitions might be standing in both places in his or her peace looking through My Vision—not looking as a tiny body with little eyes

through which it looks at “the big world out there,” but as the conscious experience of Being, you might say the Mind in which all of this is being experienced this part of town, or that part of town, or the people here, or the people there.

But the thing is, that when one is not identifying himself as a body, and looking at definitions that have been created and embraced and trusted, that one does not experience himself as being tiny.

Many of you have had experiences—momentary experiences of suddenly feeling huge. Not physically huge, but all embracingly huge. And in that experience, everything is part of you. And everything is at peace—non threatening to you or to parts of itself. You feel it’s perfection. And you’re not in the world because you’re not in the definitions you’ve created about it.

Now, how do you get out of the definitions you’ve created about everything?

You get out of the definitions you’ve created about everything by inquiring of Someone who knows better than you: By asking the Holy Spirit. By asking Me. By reaching out to the Father and asking for their Vision. You have to relinquish the trust and faith you have been placing in your own best thinking—in your own best definitions, so that you might be able to get beyond them.

So, the Holy Spirit teaches that the past does not exist. A fact which belongs to the sphere of knowledge, of Knowing, and which therefore no-one in the world knows; no-one caught in their definitions still knows. It would be indeed impossible to be in the world with this knowledge. As I’ve said, when you have abandoned the perceptions that you have developed for the experience of knowledge, then you don’t find yourself in the world. You don’t find yourself in the local where you’ve suddenly had this experience of being huge and where everything is part of you. And where the word, “place” means nothing—and actually the word, “size” means nothing. And you’re not in something or out of something. And you’re not “here” or “there.” But all of creation still exists and is still available to you which you will still experience but not as though you’re in it.

It would indeed be impossible to BE in the world . . .

. . . it would be impossible to be in your perceptions with this knowledge. Because with that knowledge you would have abandoned your perceptions. That’s why it would be impossible to be in that world—created or colored by your perceptions.

[Raj did not finish prior sentence]

For the mind that knows this unequivocally knows also that it dwells in eternity, and utilizes no perception at all.

. . . utilizes no definitions at all; utilizes no personal, private function of the mind of reasoning and coming to conclusions and then placing faith in conclusions and coming to a place of feeling credible and worthy and worthwhile as an independent individuality.

It therefore does not consider where it is, because the concept “where” does not mean anything to it. It knows that it is EVERYWHERE, . .

. . . and we could say that it knows that it is THE everywhere.

. . . just as it HAS EVERYTHING, and FOREVER.

Now, you can see that what I’m talking about and what is being described here is a movement into an experience—not an intellectual grasping of an idea—not a development of the better perception. But a new experience of everything that you’ve already been experiencing.

We’re talking about making a shift. What—a shift in the way you sit? A shift in the way you stand? A shift in the way you hold yourself as you walk?

No. A shift in the manner in which you’re choosing to look at everything. A shift away from your own private observation—evaluation—and conclusions, into an active curiosity. As I’ve said before, to see the more of what is here than what you’re seeing.

You see, that’s why you have to say, “Above all else I wish to see” and “Above all else I wish to see differently! And I want to do it the only way that is available to do it and that is, by asking Jesus—by asking the Christ to share with me His Vision. Because that Vision was given to Him for me by God.”

Why? Why was it given to Him for me by God? Well, very simply, because it’s not your birthright to suffer. It’s not your birthright to not know who you Are. It’s not your birthright not to have available to you the incredible ultimate of what you’re capable of—not what you’re capable of as an incredible private human being, but what you’re capable of because what you Are. What you Are, not what you were raised to think you are.

The very real difference between perception and knowledge . . .

. . . and you know that I tend to use the word Knowing more than the word knowledge, but . . .

. . . the very real difference between perception and

Knowledge . . .

. . . or Knowing . . .

. . . becomes quite apparent if you consider this: There is nothing partial about knowledge.

There is nothing partial about the experience of Knowing. It is an infinite experience. It's an all-inclusive experience.

In Australia, in the one of the Gatherings that we did there, we were in a large room and the ceiling was not flat. It stepped up in graduation—from a low outer edge of the ceiling to a higher inner portion of the ceiling. And as Paul was sitting there and I was speaking, Paul had the experience of the wholeness of the room and the integrity or integratedness of the room. And what this meant was, that where he could see the steps moving up toward the raised center portion of the ceiling, where those steps of plaster and material were, there was also open space below it that allowed you to see the shape and he experienced the fact that that emptiness was full; was an integral part of his experiencing the solid stepped up shape of the ceiling. And that the two—the emptiness and the form, complemented each other perfectly and were absolutely essential to each other. They constituted a living partnership.

A living partnership. It wasn't just an arrangement of space and solids. The two, for lack of better words, cooperated with each other. And this was true of the exterior part of the building and the space that went on out to the stars as it met the shape of the roof and the sides of the building and formed a partnership if you will. Everything was exquisitely engaged in a cooperative and conscious act—infinite act of relationship. And it was holy.

It was a fleeting experience for Paul but it has remained indelible in his mind. And it expresses what we're talking about here when it comes to a shift of experience. Paul had seen buildings as long as he could remember. So the building wasn't something new and the space wasn't something new. But all of a sudden, it was unlike anything he had experienced before. Because it wasn't inanimate matter and empty space having a certain relationship because somebody decided to knock together some pieces of wood and lathe and plaster, etc. No. It was an experience of the Presence of God Being all there is right there and everywhere. An experience that is available to him all the time even though he does not yet experience it. And It's an experience that is available to you all the time even though you don't choose to experience it. You don't choose to experience it because most of you haven't been told often enough that there's more to experience.

But, if this chapter in this book is to mean anything to you that's valuable, you must come to understand that this is what the words, "from perception to knowledge" mean. Not from perception—mental definitions, to knowledge—a mental experience

of permanent eternal facts; No. A movement from perception--definitions of everything, to an innocent and fresh ongoing willingness to look at everything without preconceptions. So that you might see the freshness of the Movement of God in every moment in everything.

But again, here's the hooker: You can't move from perception to knowledge all by yourself. Perception is an alone-isolated on-purpose act of independence. Knowledge, or the experience of Knowing, only occurs in a joined state.

"Above all else I want . . . above all else I want to experience; to see everything through your Vision, which is your Gift to me from God."

Again . . .

The very real difference between perception and knowledge becomes quite apparent if you consider this: There is nothing partial about knowledge.

That's what Paul learned in Australia in that Gathering.

Every aspect is whole, and therefore no aspect is separate.

There's not separate space and separate form.

Every aspect is whole, and therefore no aspect is separate. YOU are an aspect of knowledge, being in the Mind of God. Who KNOWS you.

Now, because that's true and I'm continuing . . .

All knowledge must be yours, . . .

. . . in other words, Knowing must be the natural state and function and action of your Being.

All knowledge must be yours, for in you IS all knowledge.

Why is all knowledge in you? Because you are the state of Knowing. There can't be anything else in Knowing except what is Known.

Now . . .

Perception at its loftiest, is never complete. Even the perception of the Holy Spirit, as perfect as perception can be, . .

. . . in other words, the perception of the Holy Spirit is as perfect as perception can be
...

Even the perception of the Holy Spirit, as perfect as perception can be is without meaning in Heaven. Perception can reach everywhere under His guidance, for the vision of Christ beholds everything in light. Yet no perception, however holy, will last forever.

Now this is very important: (Raj did not read title: THE ROLE OF HEALING)

Perfect perception then, has many elements in common with knowledge, . .

. . . in other words, perfect perception can involve the awareness of that which can be known . . .

. . . making transfer to it possible. Yet the last step must be taken by God, because the last step in your redemption, which seems to be in the future, was accomplished by God in your creation.

Now, did that sound complicated? Let me read it again:

Perfect perception then, has many elements in common with knowledge, making transfer to it possible. Yet the last step must be taken by God, because the last step in your redemption, which seems to be in the future . . .

. . . afterall, you're workin' toward it aren't ya? . . .

. . . which seems to be in the future, was accomplished by God in your creation . . .

. . . way back when...in the Beginning.

Now this really isn't that complicated. We're talking about shifting from perception to knowledge. Perception is what you engage in when you think that you're a private autonomous little piss-ant human being born of a sperm and a egg—part of the process of evolution on planet Earth, etc., etc., etc., you know, perceptions—definitions, right? Perception is what you experience when you insist upon acting private, claiming privacy. You can have nothing else available to you except the experience of perception. Perception therefore, is not something that can ever become totally perfected. Because perception is held by something that doesn't exist in actuality—a sense of yourself, a concept of yourself; a definition of yourself that

you've made up and superimposed upon what you already divinely Are. You've found in reading the Course many places where it says in so many words, that God must take the last step.

Well, let's put it this way: When you got a divorce from God and said, "Father I'd rather see it my way—I'd rather do it my way—Sayonara," you claimed an independence that you couldn't really ever have and you behaved as though the independence was actual. And you stepped away from God. You stepped away from that which was your very Source. You stepped away from that which was Be-ing you and continued to be you—Source you, even while you were insisting on believing that you were quite independent and on your own and doing quite well at it and feeling really good with yourself about it.

The reason that the Course says that the Father must take the last step, or that the Father will take the last step, is that at the end of the undoing of your dream, at the end of the undoing of your attempt to be something that you can't be, you yield your so-called right to be an independent autonomous thinker—you yield that up to God. You yield back to God. You yield back to That which has been all there is to you since the Beginning. That's what it means.

. . . the last step must be taken by God, . .

It might seem that it's the last step is being taken by God, because when you arrive at the point where you take your last independent step and you abandon taking steps forever, That which has been Be-ing you forever, suddenly infills you. You are reminded by the Presence of God of what you Are and you come back into your sanity. And so in that sense, God takes the last step, because you've stop taking steps on your own. And in the absence of your private self-assertion, God being all there is of you, is able to become your experience once again. And you rediscover the meaning of the word, "sanity."

Yet the last step must be taken by God, because the last step in your redemption, which seems to be in the future, was accomplished by God in your creation.

What was accomplished? God Be-ing you was what constituted your existence. That was what was accomplished by God in your creation. And that was what was never altered. And that is what will fill you up—bless you, you might say, when you abandon taking private steps yourself ever again.

The separation has not interrupted it.

Your fantasy never caused reality to be interrupted or altered.

Creation cannot BE interrupted. The separation is merely a faulty formulation of reality, . .

. . . an imagination!

And oh, you're all so good at imagining. It doesn't take much of an event in your day to cause you to run off with wild imaginings about "what she really meant or what she was REALLY trying to say" in spite of what the words were that came out of her mouth, and on and on.

The separation is . . .

. . . or was . . .

. . . merely a faulty formulation of reality, with no effect at all.

But you want to know something? In spite of the fact that it had no real effect at all, you are suffering from the effects of it. If you are experiencing suffering in any form, you are suffering from the effects of it.

Now, we need to take a moment to remember the great importance of the word, "need." Needs are like a fulcrum—they are a pivot point—they are a place in which sudden shifts of perception can occur. Or they are places where you can even, through using the words of this book, turn yourself into a cold hard-hearted bastard or bitch who self-righteously stands over and against his or her brother or sister letting them know, "Well, you created your problems—you're not an innocent victim. What do you expect when you do this and this and this? I can show in the Course here—I'll be glad to show you in the Course here where it tells you exactly what you've been doing wrong and that you can't really expect to have any different experience. Yes, it's very clear-cut black and white. Uh-hm... So don't complain to me. Get hold of your life and hey, you know, give me a call when you're feeling better."

That's not a response to need. That's a way to avoid being involved in the blessing that need holds out. You know, spiritual teachings and especially the Course, are not here to help you not be bothered by suffering.

How can I put it? You are here to alleviate suffering. You are here to do something about suffering. You are here to be the agent for change which brings about correction to suffering. You're here to get your hands dirty! And become involved by what? Shifting from perception to knowledge. By being willing to look into your brother's eyes who is suffering, and not spew forth some crap—spiritual crap—metaphysical crap! Course in Miracles hate!

"Well, you're creating this for yourself! Well you know, you don't even exist!"

These are not healing answers—these are not corrective answers, these don't indicate that an event has occurred, a shift from perception to knowledge. They don't indicate that you've stood there and done what Paul and Susan are calling, "the two-step" where something happens and the first step is that you step back before you respond, and the second step is to ask God what needs to be known here, or to ask your Guide, or the Holy Spirit.

You need to learn to do the two-step. All the time. Because, that's what you are here for. You're here to come from knowledge. You're here to come from the experience of Knowing because that's your function. You're not here to breed more and more perception. You're not here to father more and more perception. You're not here to let your imagination go wild and tell somebody exactly why they're suffering and that it's their fault and then tell them to do something about it and walk off. No. You must do the two-step.

Let me ask you all something: If you go where no correction is called for, and you go there all day every day, at the end of the day what can you say that you've contributed? And what of your purpose for being can you say that you have performed or expressed? Can you go to bed at night and say, "Well, today I got up and I looked for places where need was occurring. I looked for places where suffering was occurring so that I might do the two-step and bring to that situation what would end the suffering. And did I hang in there with my brother because he was worth my spending the time to do the two-step?"

If you're brother is down in the pit, you have to go down into the pit with your brother and walk him back out. And you may indeed go down into the pit and say, "I see exactly how you got yourself here and because I see exactly how you got yourself here, I can show you the way out. It's as simple as the way you got in."

That's evidence of shifting from perception to knowledge. "Above all else I wish to see. Above all else I wish to see differently. Above all else I wish to see everything through your Eyes, Holy Spirit, or your Eyes, Jesus. I wish to look through your Vision, which is your Gift to me and you're giving it to me as you perform in your function, which is your Gift to me from God. And you know what? I ask for it, so that I might give it to my brother."

Wow, no isolation there, is there? "I wish to see everything through your Vision, Jesus, so that I might give it to my brother." That's the Answer. The whole answer is embodied in what we've said tonight in what little we've read in this chapter tonight.

So, again I'm encouraging all of you to get off your duffs and to abandon intellectual metaphysical or spiritual pursuits and translate all of this that we've been reading and that you've been studying for years, into a new way of being that involves the practice of the "two-step." It really involves the practice of everything that's in this book.

Oh, many years ago, there was a catchy little phrase that made it's rounds... "Engage in random acts of kindness." It was a neat little thought-catchy so it would stay in your mind and remind you that you could do spontaneous little things—random acts of kindness. Not well-planned out kind acts, but a little nod of the head, or a smile at somebody or opening the door for somebody or what ever might occur, but for it to be a random thing.

Well, let the two-step be a similar thing to remind you during the day. To remind you to find and see where need is occurring so that you might be able to do the two-step and bring into play that which corrects the need; resolves the need.

I love you all. And I look forward to being with you, not next Saturday but the following Saturday.

A Course In Miracles (reference pages)

¹ *Sparkly Book – Lesson 27, p. 42*

² *Sparkly Book – Lesson 28, p. 43*

³ *Philippians 2:5*

Chapter 13 – FROM PERCEPTION TO KNOWLEDGE

⁴ *Sparkly Book – p.302 / JCIM – p.127*

Chapter 13 – THE GUILTLESS WORLD – Section – FROM PERCEPTION TO KNOWLEDGE

First Edition – p. 240 / Second Edition – p. 258

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