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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2024
A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

...when you meet anyone, remember
it is a holy encounter.



What's Occupying Your Mind?

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

Many years ago, the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York City and other "Occupies" around the country popped up to protest the financial challenges and wealth inequities and to call for help, now. I think we can still relate, as the financial wealth gap remains quite significant. Many problems in our world occupy our minds, from mass shootings to domestic and global terrorism. Calls for attack and war have become commonplace instead of the last possible alternative to societal conflict. As Mother Teresa said,



"...If everyone could see the image of God in his neighbor, do you think we would still need tanks and generals?"

"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other. That man, that woman, that child is my brother or my sister. If everyone could see the image of God in his neighbor, do you think we would still need tanks and generals?"

You probably know people who have experienced many challenging times, and perhaps even yourself. I frequently receive communications from supporters who are

having tough times. I can see how the growing discontent over the problems and solutions (or lack thereof) has become fertile ground for frustration. We as a society must take a serious look at what is going on. It is essential that we look so that change can take place, but it must be a change that understands we belong to each other, or it will not last.

When I observe what's happening in the world, I often ask myself, "What can I learn from this?" *A Course in Miracles* suggests we ask, "What is this for?" It reminds us that the external world only reflects an inner condition.

At first thought, this comment might seem pretty depressing. With all the hate and attack going on, to be told this reflects an inner condition can make us feel defeated. That, however, is not what the Course intends for us to focus on. Its wise counsel suggests we see this world and all that happens in it as our responsibility, not so that we beat ourselves up (as our egos would suggest), but so we can take responsibility and know our healing is possible — in fact, that it is inevitable. You see, if we are responsible

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A FREE Gift is Waiting for YOU!

Nearly ten years ago, we debuted



our Free Daily ACIM Lesson Email Service, which sends your personal Course lesson to you each day. It was quickly embraced by students eager to have their daily lessons from the Course appear in their inbox.

Since then, over 16 million free daily lessons have been sent. Being able to select the lesson number on which you wish to begin and our sophisticated software being able to continue the lessons in sequence each day afterward was a revolutionary approach.

But we did not stop there! Eager to keep up with technology, early last year, we introduced an additional option to receive lessons by text at a nominal fee.

Now, we are delighted to announce that due to the generosity of many of our donors, we can now offer the text option FREE to you!

Imagine checking your phone each morning to find your personal lesson waiting for you to practice AND looking in your inbox to see your lesson there as well, as a gift from MDC.

Visit our website and click "Services" and "Daily Lesson Email & Text" to sign

Continued on page 2

Beverly is the co-founder and president of MDC, one of the longest-running organizations based on *A Course in Miracles*. As a student, lecturer and author on the Course since 1977, her streamed weekly commentaries on Course principles have become an inspirational study and spiritual family for many around the world. View her free weekly livestream meetings at miraclecenter.org

What's Happening...with the Course and the Center

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● **Join viewers from 145 countries around the world!** Our weekly livestream with founder Beverly Hutchinson McNeff welcomed viewers from across the globe,



including students from Ukraine, Russia, and China. The map shows international and U.S. viewership in blue. We currently have viewers in 75% of the world's countries! We invite you to tune in on **Wednesdays at 7:00 pm Pacific Time** to watch free or become a subscriber to watch at your convenience, have access to over 450 archived meetings, and participate through an online chat room.

● **Miracle Milestones (MM)** — Celebrate your loved ones or yourself with a gift to the Center! Many have chosen to celebrate MMs with a donation. Whether it's a birthday, anniversary, or remembering a loved one, making a gift to the Center (and inviting others to as well) is a way to keep the love and joy flowing. **SandyB** in **Washington** took the Birthday challenge and donated \$100.00 for Beverly's Birthday. **Mrs. Charles Drumm** shared \$35.00 for her 35 years as a Course student. **Rae Karen and Elliott in Florida** shared \$26.00 for their 26th anniversary.

● **Lessons in Light series** — Beginning **February 14** and continuing through the forty days leading up to Easter, this popular series shines a new light on the concepts surrounding this season. The lessons are on pages 8-9 of this issue, and also on MDC's website.

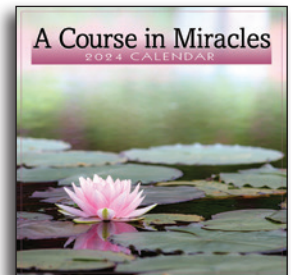
● **Retreat Experience Made Easy** — Now is the perfect time to reserve your place at our next **Holy Encounter Retreat** on **September 27- 29, 2024**. These retreats give students time to go deeper into the experience of *A Course in Miracles* while enjoying the peaceful setting of the incredible ranch property. Space is limited, and some room types will sell out. Our convenient payment plan offers low monthly payments throughout the year. Visit our website or call for details.

● **FREE Valentine ACIM e-Cards** — Share a thought from the Course electronically with friends and family this Valentine's Day! We have come up with a variety of beautiful, full-color e-cards with poignant Course quotes for every occasion, so check it out. It's easy and **FREE** on our website!



● **Our 2024 A Course in Miracles Wall Calendar is still available** — Featuring stunning full-color photos along with inspiring

quotes from the Course, this calendar is sure to keep the Course's message near you all year long. Quotes are from the recording *The Invitation to Healing* by Beverly Hutchinson and Steven Halpern and contain a free download of that recording. It's a meaningful gift to give and receive.



● **God does not hear our words**, but the prayers of our hearts are the wise counsel from the Course. Beautiful words and lovely prayers can be helpful to us, but they do not get us better access to God's loving Answer, whereas a heart focused on healing and willingness opens a gentle path to God. Let us use this intent as we turn to God in prayer... that we may let the world's distractions cease so we might be willing to experience His healing and guidance. We invite you to stop and join us each day at **4:30 pm (Pacific Time)** for a moment of prayerful support for yourself, your loved ones, and everyone in the prayer ministry. Thoughts for:

January: "Your Peace is with me, Father. I am safe." (Lesson 245)

February: "I place the future in the Hands of God." (Lesson 194)

March: "Love holds no grievances." (Lesson 68) ❖

Our 2024 Bookmark is Available!

Thoughts in the Miracle Prayer Ministry 2024
Each day at 4:30 p.m. (Pacific Time) we stop for a moment of prayer as we join our minds with God for the healing of all His children. We hope these lessons from the Workbook of *A Course in Miracles* will serve as a guide for your prayerful joining.

January: Your peace is with me, Father. I am safe. (245)
February: I place the future in the Hands of God. (194)
March: Love holds no grievances. (68)
April: My grievances hide the light of the world in me. (69)
May: I choose the joy of God instead of pain. (190)
June: There is nothing my holiness cannot do. (38)
July: God is my Source. I cannot see apart from Him. (41)
August: Above all else I want to see. (27)
September: God's Will for me is perfect happiness. (131)
October: In quiet I receive God's Word today. (125)
November: My holiness blesses the world. (37)
December: Your peace is with me, Father. I am safe. (245)

Request your **FREE** full-color bookmark today which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2024.

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A FREE Gift...

Continued from page 1

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SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024

Holy Encounter Retreat



This retreat is designed to help students not just talk about A Course in Miracles but to experience deeply its healing power. Through lectures, meditation, group sharing, music, and laughter, you will be helped to see, and look beyond, the limitations of this world and experience the possibility of God in every aspect of your life.



Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

is an international lecturer, author, and founder of the Center. She brings over forty years of Course study to this weekend that will leave you with the tools and understanding you'll need to experience miracles in your life.

Known for her ability to take seemingly complex lessons and reveal their truth and simplicity, Beverly will help you open up to the worth and beauty inside you now.

"I came away with down-to-earth principles that helped me make sense of things in terms of forgiveness, judgment, etc. The environment and food were great... I just had a great time overall!"



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"Beverly made the Course so easy to understand. I'm always getting this message that the Course is so hard and she makes it so simple."

The **Holy Encounter Retreat** will be held at the majestic RW Ranch Spiritual Retreat Center in Lucerne Valley, California. Sessions will be conducted in comfortable meeting rooms and time for reflection and meditation may be experienced in various landscaped parks, intimate flower gardens, beside a tumbling stream, or peaceful ponds... each offering

privacy, seclusion, and a distinctive setting.

Everything is included: the week-end retreat activities, well-appointed lodging, and six organic, chef-prepared meals. Our caring and experienced staff, coupled with an oasis in the heart of Southern California, will

provide you a safe and wonderful atmosphere for learning and sharing – a weekend where you can truly spend time on your own internal healing.

Please join us as we take a "journey without distance" to find that even in a world of chaos, our goal of peace and forgiveness has never changed.



Register now, space is limited. Price includes all retreat activities, six organic meals, and lodging.



To register visit **miraclecenter.org** or call **800-359-ACIM (2246)**





Miracle Musings...

In-N-Out-N-In

by Paul McNeff

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

"I will not hurt myself again today. ...The mind that is made willing to accept God's gifts has been restored to spirit, and extends its freedom and its joy, as is the Will of God united with its own." (W-330.1)

*"Just when I thought I was out,
they pull me back in!"*

You may recognize this famous line as it was spoken by Michael Corleone, played by Al Pacino, in the film *The Godfather: Part III*. In his efforts to become a legitimate businessman, Michael discovers that he's been double-crossed by his Mafia cohorts. With these words, Michael expresses his biggest and irreversible fear. He'll never be able to escape his life as a Mafia don and mob boss.

I have found myself having similar feelings. After experiencing *A Course in Miracles'* teachings as they help liberate me "out" of the ego, I often suffer the insanity of being pulled back "in" its crazy world. I guess you could call it the "In-N-Out" experience. And I don't mean the burger place.

However, when compared to Michael Corleone's inescapable enslavement of being "in" the Mafia, then "out" of the Mafia, and then back "in" again, the Course provides us with a plan of getting "out" which will be permanent. No matter how many times we are pulled back "in" the world of ego, thank God we won't be doomed forever by our oppressing thoughts, as we

can experience the liberation of getting "out" of ego's relentless grip with this simple choice of acceptance: The Self which God created is our true Identity.

In Workbook lesson 330: "I will not hurt myself again today," we unearth some very specific strategies on our journey out of the ego and into the light.



*"Just when I thought I was out,
they pull me back in!"*

*we teach them they are powerless,
when God holds out His power and
His Love, and bids
them take what is
already theirs?"*

The first part of this lesson hit me like a gentle gut punch... if a gut punch can be gentle. Have you ever found yourself in a situation of self-inflicted hurt? The Course reminds us that we can stop doing that. As the Jackson Browne/Glenn Frey song says: "Take it easy, take

it easy. Don't let the sound of your own wheels make you crazy." Good advice from the Course as well as from the Eagles.

The choice is ours. But why do we delay our choice to accept forgiveness as our only function? Do we put it off because we believe our grievances have too tight a grip on us? Do we believe that we have to wait, who knows how long, for the "perpetrator" of our grievance to offer up an apology for how they have wronged us? Or do we choose to take the abiding hand of our elder brother, Jesus, and say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?" With confidence, you can say to yourself, I no longer want to remain powerless over my pain.

Again, it comes down to choices. If you feel like you've slipped out of a peaceful state of mind and back into destructive ego thoughts, have this conversation with yourself: "Would holding on to this perceived pain of my making serve my best interests, or would letting it go to the higher power within, free me so I can return to a peaceful state of mind and thereby be guided to a healed outcome?"

The Course goes on to direct us,

*"The mind that is made
willing to accept God's
gifts has been restored to
spirit, and extends its free-
dom and its joy, as is the*

*Will of God united
with its own. The
Self which God cre-
ated cannot sin, and
therefore cannot
suffer. Let us choose
today that He be our
Identity, and thus es-
cape forever from all things the dream*



*"Then calamity struck.
Just after driving the new car
off the lot, my friend called me
and said he had to back out
of the deal."*

escape forever from all things the dream

Paul McNeff is married to MDC's founder and has been a student of the Course since 1986. He is a professional singer and conductor and holds a master's degree in vocal performance. In 1997, along with Beverly, he founded *KidSingers*, an inner-city, afterschool children's chorus. The program has won many awards and been featured on *Good Morning America*. Learn more at: www.kidsingers.org

of fear appears to offer us.” (W-330.1)

As the farmer plows his field to prepare for the growth of his crops, the Course encourages us to prepare our minds by cultivating a little willingness. Once planted, the seeds of willingness will restore the source of Spirit, where the Will of God is the only thing that is real. As we enter this reality, we can forever escape the self-inflicted pains we have created.

Some time ago, I wanted to get a new car. A friend told me he liked my old car and wanted to buy it from me. The money I could get from the sale of my old car would make a sizeable down payment on the new one. However, before we closed the deal, as the excitement grew over getting the new car, I impetuously moved forward with the purchase. Then calamity struck.

Just after driving the new car off the lot, my friend called me and said he had to back out of the deal. I was flabbergasted! I pressed him and demanded it was only right that he follow through with his end of the deal. He refused. Chagrined, with my tail between my legs, I returned the new car to the dealer and kept my old car, the only loss being one of pride. I learned a valuable lesson, however: When striking this kind of deal, it's always a good thing to have the money upfront before you move forward with your new purchase.

This situation caused quite a grievance with my friend. I felt rightfully justified in seeing him guilty of breaking our deal and thereby causing me pain. Justifying my grievance because I was “right” kept me trapped in my ego. The Course is very specific about this as it teaches,

“The world you see is but the idle witness that you were right. This witness is insane. You trained it in its testimony, and as it gave it back to you, you listened and convinced yourself that what it saw was true. You did this to yourself. See only this, and you will also see how circular the reasoning on which your ‘seeing’ rests. This was



“Change dawns on us when we are willing to see our brother’s needs as not apart from our own.”

not given you. This was your gift to you and to your brother. Be willing, then, to have it taken from him and be replaced with truth. And as you look upon the change in him, it will be given you to see it in yourself.” (T-21.II.5)

Change dawns on us when we are willing to see our brother’s needs as not apart from our own. While it took me a while to get past my need to be right, I eventually chose to move forward to a more peaceful state of mind. In the end, I realized this bad situation was one of my own making and born out of my impatience. I learned another valuable, and perhaps even more important, lesson: I needed to forgive my friend and myself before I could move on to more positive things.

So, don’t despair when you feel your spiritual progression sometimes takes detours. Always be assured that when you feel the “out” that Spirit can bring, and then get caught back into the “in” and pain the ego can bring, you can choose once again and re-enter the peaceful state of the “out.” In-N-Out-N-In! The miracle of a shift of perception.

Finally, be comforted by this prayer from the Course,

“Father, Your Son can not be hurt. And if we think we suffer, we but fail to know our one Identity we share with You. We would return to It today, to be made free forever from all our mistakes, and to be saved from what we thought we were.” (W-330.2) ❖

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Living Miracles



Miracles are timeless, and even years after they occur, they stick with you. I remember as if it were yesterday the experience I had with a lady after presenting a sermon at one of my favorite local churches. I had met her many times, and again she and I were chatting in the social hall. But she had something new to share; she was now residing in an assisted living home. She continued...

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with Beverly Hutchinson McNeff



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Recognizing Spirit

Life as a Spiritual Classroom:

Inspirational Psychology and Holding the Door Open for Love

by Lee Jampolsky, Ph.D.

I begin on a personal note. I have always felt highly sensitive to people's struggles and challenges. As a child, I could not make sense of feeling other people's and animals' pain so deeply, and at times, it felt burdensome, personal, and lonely. Unkind acts, lack of caring, and void of meaning in so many lives made the world difficult for my younger self to inhabit. I searched for ways to survive, including drugs and other pseudo-forms of protection.

Some situations or human conditions felt searing to my soul. By adolescence, I thought of things none of my peers seemed to concern themselves with: What does my loneliness mean?

How do I engage with another human being beyond the superficial? How do I fit in and connect when I find speaking challenging? Through the decades, I became more sensitive with more questions, but the difference was that I increasingly came to know I am not alone and never have been. With this, my sensitivity transformed into a gift of listening to what is beyond the surface of our existence.

"If I am with you in the loneliness of the world, the loneliness is gone. You cannot maintain the illusion of loneliness if you are not alone." (T-8.IV.2,6)

Have you ever been so angry that you could not see the perspective of others? Have you ever felt so traumatized or hurt that you felt psychologically incapable of hearing someone else's experience, let alone empathizing? These are everyday individual experiences of most humans

at some point in their lives. And it is also the root of war. A person or culture void of the awareness of love is fearful and can only revitalize by seeing and removing the obstacles to love.

"The relationship of anger to attack is obvious, but the relationship of anger to fear is not always so apparent."
(T-6.in.1)

For those of us not submerged in the trauma and pain, our job is to do our best



"Have you ever felt so traumatized or hurt that you felt psychologically incapable of hearing someone else's experience, let alone empathizing?"

to empathize with all suffering humans instead of habitually assigning blame. Taking sides at every opportunity may seem like a caring or logical thing, but it is often a lazy and unquestioned habit of the ego at the cost of interpersonal or international peace. When another person or group seems a million miles from a peaceful state of mind, we can help by seeing the possibil-

ity of healing so that one day, when their pain begins to lessen, they may choose to inhabit the space of peace we have held open for them. The holding of this peaceful space is a sacred act, one that is minimized in importance. In short, we can answer the call to be the light bearers during our darkest days. To commit to love in such a profound way is to pledge to a life beyond the ego's limitations and beliefs, all of which originate from fear. The practice of *A Course in Miracles* is given us as a means to erode the ego's dualistic hold so we may live in and from love.

I understand that many would argue

this is naive in a world filled to the brim with good reasons to judge harshly, but there is another way to navigate our lives than with divisiveness and blame. Many people have become disillusioned or numb while seeing division and wars spread in the world and our communities; they have little space within to acknowledge and empathize with the pain of others near and far. With *A Course in Miracles*, we are given a means — forgiveness — to shift our perception so profoundly that we call the awareness of love into our minds and the minds of all humanity. We are given forgiveness to nourish the light of love in our hearts and the world. Forgiveness is the antidote to hatred and suffering, individually and collectively.

"Forgiveness is the healing of the perception of separation... Know yourself in the One Light where the miracle that is you is perfectly clear." (T-3.V.9-10)

Much is said about the precarious state of our world: Climate change, unprecedented personal and political discord, unthinkable violence at home and abroad, homelessness and poverty, and a litany of problems that can lead to hopelessness, despair, and denial. To rise above the battlefield and find happiness in day-to-day life, those on a spiritual path may fall prey to thinking there is nothing they can do, or inadvertently sugarcoating and living with spiritual platitudes to stay positive.

Our experiences in the world, no matter what they may be, are a classroom to heal, to remember our Source, our connection with each other, and all life. From this perspective, no challenges from our shared lives can be without a higher purpose, never empty of meaning or void of a purpose of awakening. In short, everything is a lesson to lead us to the one solution: love. The question is, will we listen to the

inner voice calling us home or continue to spiral in the madness that we are all separate from one another, isolated, and with little choice in how we feel and respond?

"Choose once again what you would have him be, remembering that every choice you make establishes your own identity as you will see it and believe it is." (T-31.VIII.6:5)

The ego is the part of our mind that believes we are fundamentally separate from each other and our Source and doesn't want us to awaken to our interconnectedness. Quite the opposite, the ego is invested in perceiving the world in such a way that leads you to feel more powerless and afraid. The ego keeps you hungry for more, a hunger that can never be satisfied. Living in this way, we rarely question our beliefs and perceptions, though these are the source of our unhappiness. Thus, fear divides us without seeing that our thoughts need healing. In turn, collective fearful attitudes and conflict radiate into the world, increasing interpersonal and global conflict.

We see an increasing loneliness and disconnection in the world today (and perhaps in our lives). In my time with Mother Teresa, she commented many times on spiritual deprivation, and today, perhaps more than while she was with us, we live in a world of billions of people and have more spiritual deprivation and isolation than ever. With such a shared experience, it is easy to feel lonely and hopeless to address what appear to be overwhelming problems where deep

connection, intimacy, and authenticity are all but forgotten.

While traveling in this body for a blip in time, my life's purpose is to bring as many moments as possible of beauty and love. Though I may have little control over what happens each day in the world, I do have a choice in how I respond. Will it be from love or fear? From harsh judgment or tender understanding? From attack and defensiveness or care and healing? Knowing the power of Spirit behind these questions, we can increasingly feel freed from the tireless burden

of the ego and angst that comes from forgetting who we are and from where we long to return.

Take time to take a step back and reflect. Sometimes, as of late, the pursuit of individual happiness can deny the existence of the call for love in the world. Finding happiness does not include or rely on denying our responsibilities to one another. Our liberation from the ego is founded on becoming aware of how intimately connected we are. Take time each day to see that what matters is love, what effects foundational change is kindness, and what collectively heals is solidarity in knowing we go home hand in hand. Become more aware and in awe of love and hold the space open for others to return to love in every moment.

"Pause and be still a little while, and see how far you rise above the world, when you release your mind from chains and let it seek the level where it finds itself at home. It will be

grateful to be free a while. It knows where it belongs." (W-128.6:1)



"We are given forgiveness to nourish the light of love in our hearts and the world. Forgiveness is the antidote to hatred and suffering..."



"...fear divides us without seeing that our thoughts need healing. In turn, collective fearful attitudes and conflict radiate into the world, increasing interpersonal and global conflict."

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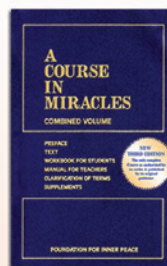
LESSON 125
In quiet I receive God's Word today.
1. Let this day be a day of stillness and of quiet listening. Your Father wills you hear His Word today. And so He calls from deep within your mind where He abides. Hear Him today. No peace is possible until His Word is heard around the world; until your mind, in quiet listening, accepts the message that the world must hear to usher in the quiet time of peace.



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Sacrificing Sacrifice

Shifting our Perception of Lent

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

Lessons in Light Begin...

We invite you to join us for our Lessons in Light. This Easter season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024. These lessons will be part of our free, weekly livestream meetings every Wednesday as a way to focus our minds on lasting transformation and healing. These lessons need not be a substitute for your regular workbook lesson from the Course but rather a supplement. The printed series is available online at miraclecenter.org. We hope you will join us!

As lesson 323 in *A Course in Miracles* says, "I gladly make the 'sacrifice' of fear." If you are ready to release the sacrificing thoughts that yoke you to fear, we can use the traditional time of Lent to do just that. The Course invites us to look with a healed vision, guided by the Holy Spirit, to view the ideas of Christianity in a new light. Not one that separates us from each other but one that unites us in healing. Therefore, during this time that leads up to Easter, referred to as the Lenten season, we will offer a series entitled: Lessons in Light. Why even deal with Lent since the Course does not speak about it? Well, it may not say the word, but it does address the concept that is the focus of Lent, and an important one, it is: sacrifice. So, as most in the western world might approach this time from the perspective of sacrifice, perhaps we can offer an alternative: light!

In the Course, light represents knowledge or truth which can be radiated into this world. Just as the light of the sun causes life to exist on this planet, so does the light we shine allow others to realize their true life purpose, allowing us to know it as well. So, we symbolically let our light shine during this time of Lent so the darkness and illusion of sacrifice may be

seen no more.

In the Christian tradition, Lent is a time of fasting and penitence that begins with Ash Wednesday and continues until Easter. It is a time of sacrificing something we value, such as a specific type of food, a



"Just as the light of the sun causes life to exist on this planet, so does the light we shine allow others to realize their true life purpose, allowing us to know it as well."

particular activity, etc., so that we might be closer to God, become more holy, and so on. In this scenario, God's Love is seen as something we must bargain for, as the Course says, "giving to get," (T-4.II.6:5) which is the central belief of the ego's thought system. "When you associate giving with sacrifice, you give only be-

cause you believe that you are somehow getting something better, and can therefore do without the thing you give." (ibid)

Under the Holy Spirit's guidance, there is no sacrifice, for there is nothing to pay or atone for. We are God's perfect children — heirs to His Kingdom. In His Presence, all pain is healed, and all thoughts of loss are met with peace. We are asked only to make the "sacrifice" of sacrifice (of suffering, sadness, anxiety, doubt, etc.) and to allow God's Love and light to come streaming into our awareness.

Therefore, let us use this time of Lent as a symbolic way of releasing the idea of sacrifice — a world of suffering and pain

— and to learn to live in the world while not being of the world. The Course says that truth does not demand that we give up the world, for that would appear as a sacrifice if we still value it, nor does it advocate that we cherish the world. It invites us to walk a path between these two, one that leads away from loss, sacrifice, and deprivation. To follow this path, we are asked to step back and let Him lead the way. We are asked to think of Him a while each day so that He may speak to us and tell us of His limitless Love and great trust. (paraphrase Lesson 155)

This is our dedication as we begin these Lessons in Light, that we may place into God's Hands the pain, fear, worry, suffering, sickness, and burdens of life so that we may awaken to the resurrected child of God we truly are. As the mythical bird, the Phoenix, arose out of the ashes, we too dust off the years of sacrifice by affirming our desire to "step back and let Him lead the way" as we "allow the light in us to shine upon the world throughout the day." (W-237)

Lessons in Light

1st Week of Light (February 14)
"Into His Presence would I enter now." (W-157)

This is our dedication: to enter into God's Presence and allow Him to lead the way. This awareness and willingness become a blessing that touches everyone we meet, think of, or who thinks of us. It becomes a vision that can truly transform this world and assure us that peace and healing are possible, for it is God's Will for us.

2nd Week of Light (February 21)
"Light and joy and peace abide in me." (W-93)

"Salvation requires the acceptance of

but one thought; — you are as God created you, not what you made of yourself. ...Your sinlessness is guaranteed by God." We have forgotten our true Identity and made a self that contradicts God's opinion. It is time for us to stop believing in a lie and join our will with God's Will. This is our resurrection, our salvation, and the world's.

3rd Week of Light (February 28)

"God is the Love in which I forgive." (W-46)

"God does not forgive because He has never condemned," but through His Love, we find the strength to look at the hurt in our lives and see only the calls for love. And, as we recognize the "hurt" for what it is, we awaken to our innocence and that of all our brothers.

4th Week of Light (March 6)

"Love holds no grievances." (W-68)

"You who were created by love like itself can hold no grievances and know your Self." Therefore, if we are to know God's gifts and help for us, we must be willing to "sacrifice" grievances. "Love holds no grievances. I would wake to my Self by laying all my grievances aside and wakening in Him."

5th Week of Light (March 13)

"I could see peace instead of this." (W-34)

"Peace of mind is clearly an internal matter. It must begin with your own thoughts, and then extend outward. It is from your peace of mind that a peaceful perception of the world arises. "It is our choice to experience peace!"

6th Week of Light (March 20)

"God is the strength in which I trust." (W-47)

Our own strength has failed us, but God is our safety and strength in every circumstance. "Use it [this thought] as your answer to any disturbance. Remember that peace is your right, because you are giving your trust to the strength of God."

7th Week of Light (March 27)

"I am sustained by the Love of God." (W-50)

"Put not your faith in illusions. They will fail you. Put all your faith in the Love of God within you; eternal, changeless and forever unfailing. This is the answer to whatever confronts you today."



FREE Livestream Wednesdays

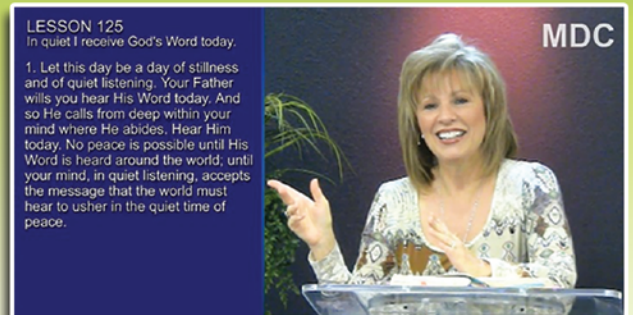
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"I have been so inspired by Beverly's weekly meetings. I am so grateful to be able to watch her online."

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A Practical Course

by Joseph Miller

As long as I can remember, I have always valued know-how. My mother's ability to transform unimpressive ingredients into delicious meals; my father's skill at diagnosing and fixing a sputtering car; the straw-hat pianist on Disneyland's Main Street joyfully pounding out ragtime on the white upright piano. We are told we live in the Information Age, but we shouldn't confuse information with knowledge. When I was a boy, if someone were to ask me, "What do you know?" I would have assumed I needed to recite the capital cities of the 50 states or the names of the three branches of government. That kind of thing was knowledge, I thought, the facts and names absorbed in the classroom.

I was once in a high school theater production, and during our downtime, one of the other boys would juggle. I was astonished, and suddenly I felt compelled to learn to juggle. According to my mother's recollection, this was a phase of family life where the fruit in the kitchen was always bruised (for some reason). At the end of that year, Santa gave me juggling balls, and the fruit began to look much better.

Suppose you were to ask me, "Do you know how to juggle?" and I replied, "Sure. You throw three or four balls in the air, and by catching and tossing, you keep them all moving." No doubt, you would retort, "That's not what I mean. I don't want information. I'm not asking for a definition. I'm asking if you can demonstrate the abili-

ty to juggle. I want you to answer me by doing something." Again, imagine asking a pianist if he knows Joplin's *The Entertainer*. You are not asking if he knows *about* it. You are asking if he has it in his fingers. Can he *play* it?

I recall hearing Marianne Williamson say that there is something preeminent-ly American about *A Course in Miracles*.

America was the right soil for its genesis. One thread that supports this view is the philosophical movement of William James and John Dewey called Pragmatism. Pragmatists shunned abstract speculation. The truth-value of a statement was in its application. A true idea is one that enables me to do something. Meaning

is a function of usefulness. Now, consider the following statements from the Course:

"You have surely begun to realize that this is a very practical course, and one that means exactly what it says. I would not ask you to do things you cannot do..." (T-8.IX.8)

"[L]isten to my voice, learn to undo error and act to correct it. ...Doing them [miracles] will bring conviction in the ability, because conviction comes through accomplishment..." (T-1.III.1)

"This is not a course in the play of ideas, but in their practical application..." (T-11.VIII.5)

"... [I]t is the practical with which this course is most concerned..." (M-29.5)

That last quote comes at the very end of the Manual for Teachers, the final volume of the Course. They are parting words, as if to say "Don't forget! Don't get caught in your head!" And then, to underscore the point, the first words that follow in the supplementary Clarification of Terms read:

"This is not a course in philosophical speculation, nor is it concerned with precise terminology. It is concerned only with Atonement, or the correction of perception..." (C-In)

John Dewey's primary criticism of modern education at the turn of the 20th Century was its emphasis on disembodied information. This perpetuated a delusive split between knowing and doing that played into social dysfunctions like classism, where tradesmen were looked down on for being uneducated, and PhDs could barely change a light bulb. The real cost was a pervasive failure to educate the whole person. *A Course in Miracles* states that meaning is to be found in "the relationships that imply being" (T-4.VII.2), and this was Dewey's position, too. Boredom in schools should tell us something. Dewey felt that where relevance is experienced, a passion to learn is spontaneously summoned.

My passion for know-how in fifth grade centered on paper airplanes and other paper-folded objects. Someone showed me how to fold an inflatable cube, which was blown up with your breath after the last fold and tuck. Mrs. Forsen, my teacher, caught me folding one of these during class one morning. "Mr. Miller, please come to my desk and bring the object you are playing with." She held out her hand, peering calmly but sternly over the heavy framed reading glasses on her nose. I handed over the puff cube, and she said, "See me after school." I was busted.



"...imagine asking a pianist if he knows Joplin's The Entertainer. You are not asking if he knows about it. You are asking if he has it in his fingers. Can he play it?"

But when I sheepishly went to Mrs. Forsen at 2:35 that afternoon, she did not scold me. She completely “overlooked” my “sin.” Instead, she brilliantly seized an opportunity to advance knowing by doing. “Joseph, tomorrow during art class I’d like you to teach all the students how to make these.” The next day I stepped into the first teaching experience of my life, giddy but glad. There was tremendous enthusiasm in the class. We first colored our sheets of paper with crayon, and then I demonstrated every fold, and walked around tutoring those who were having difficulty. The students



ed every fold, and walked around tutoring those who were having difficulty. The students

“Mr. Miller, please come to my desk and bring the object you are playing with.”

were empowered and excited to learn that they possessed the ability to transform an ordinary sheet of paper into a balloon. A bulletin board was proudly decorated with the 30 brightly colored puffs just in time for parent night.

Another statement, that strongly sounds like Pragmatism, where “use,” “meaning,” and “truth” are tied together, is from the Introduction to the Workbook:

“You are merely asked to apply the ideas as you are directed to do. You are not asked to judge them at all. You are asked only to use them. It is their use that will give them meaning to you, and will show you that they are true.

(W-In.8)

The Course will always have its scholars. And they fulfill a valuable function. But the title of the book is not *A Course in Non-Dual Metaphysics or Mystic-Gnostic Christianity for the Post-Freudian Age*. It is *A Course in Miracles*. It facilitates a know-how, not merely a know-about. The student undergoes training to become a miracle worker. The Course cannot be boiled down to a set of propositions or beliefs. We cannot “get” the Course by reading another student’s summary. We can only “get” the Course

by becoming the Teaching, where having and being are united. We are called to become living conduits of the Atonement process. And whether we can verbally give an account of that is not the point. There is no verbal test. But there is the experience of summoning the Christ in others and inviting them, through the spaciousness of forgiveness, to surrender their dark

illusions. And in so doing, we find our own prison door opening.

“In the ego’s language, ‘to have’ and ‘to be’ are different, but they are identical to the Holy Spirit. ...That is why we make no distinction between having the Kingdom of God and being the Kingdom of God.” (T-4.III.9)



Update: Prison Project

The Prison Project of Miracle Distribution Center sends *A Course in Miracles* and other Course-based items to prison inmates. Through your generous donations, we have been able to supply many newly started spiritual libraries in prisons. In some cases, we have provided multiple copies of books so more inmates can read about the love that is their essence. These principles genuinely make a difference and quench a thirst for truth that those in prison have found no other place.



We were so impressed by Mark’s letter, which shared how much it would mean to him to receive **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine, the 2024 *A Course in Miracles* Wall Calendar, and how studying ACIM lessons has inspired him. It reinforces once again how vital this project of the Center is in the lives of inmates. Miracles occur when those who find themselves in these institutions know they are loved and valued. We hope you will be inspired by Mark.

Dear Prison Project Team,

A friend here shared a copy of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine with me, and it touched me deeply. I had picked up a copy of *A Course in Miracles* but had not yet started reading it or going through the lessons at the time. I have since started the lessons and intend to repeat them at least a few more times!



In **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER**, I read a thought that really stuck with me. “Teach only Love, for that is what you are.” Thank you so much for that “spirit-for-me” wisdom.

I would be very grateful to receive my own copy of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** and the 2024

ACIM Wall Calendar. My friend showed me his ACIM calendars that he has received and kept for years; they are some of the most beautiful I have ever seen.

When I am released, I intend to continue a subscription to **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine and to be a supporter of the Prison Project.

Thank you from my heart to all of yours,

Mark at Stafford Creek Correction Center in Washington

We are honored to meet Mark’s requests and each request! Thanks to your generous support of the Prison Project and the Center, we can ensure that these appeals are answered. Contact us if you know of an inmate who would like to receive books related to the Course or **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine. Rules are strict for sending items into prisons and secured facilities, so please check with the institution before requesting items to be sent. Together, we can experience healing by demonstrating healing through our willingness to be truly helpful to others. We invite your tax-deductible donations to support this project.

To read more click on “Prison Project” under “Services” at miraclecenter.org

45 Years in the Life of MDC

1978 - 2023 ~

We are here



to be truly helpful...

Miracle Distribution Center (MDC) is now entering its 46th year of service in 2024, but we have one last anniversary article to share with you. If you want to share a memory of your journey with MDC, please feel free to send us an email, letter, or use this link: miraclecenter.org/45years. We always enjoy hearing from you and appreciate walking this path of peace with you.

I was introduced to *A Course in Miracles* with Marianne Williamson's book *A Return to Love* in 1992, and I bought my first copy of *A Course in Miracles* in 1996. Over the next seventeen years, I studied and practiced on my own. I lived in Alaska at that time, and I was a single mother with a young child and worked full time. So, there was little extra time to attend study groups in person. When I retired in 2013 and my son was launched on his own, I started looking on the internet for a local study group. I came across Miracle Distribution Center's (MDC's) website and was introduced to their Wednesday Livestream meetings. Wow! I felt like I had come home watching the first Livestream, and I still feel that way ten-plus years later!

I tried a few local study groups in Anchorage, Alaska, and in Bellingham, Washington, where I have lived for almost nine years. I had a small study group in my home for two years before the pandemic. I learned a lot and made some wonderful friends. But my Wednesday livestream meetings are where I have connected and learned the most. Beverly teaches how I learn — through personal experience and narrative. I always feel like she is speaking directly to me. I am blessed to live in the same time zone as MDC, so most Wednesdays at 7:00 pm, you will find me tuned in! I am a subscriber, so I always have a meeting to watch or listen to, no matter where or what time zone I'm in. What a gift these meetings were and are! And during the pandemic years, they were a lifeline!

In February 2015, I attended my first MDC Holy Encounter Retreat at Royal Way Ranch in Lucerne Valley, California. What an amazing experience that retreat was! I met Beverly, Paul, Tess, Darin, Bill, and other MDC folks in person. Talk about an OMG experience! Beverly took us on a deep dive into the Course teachings with such love and laughter. And the MDC staff — amazing organization

and collaboration, each with their own special talent. I could write long accolades for each of them! How blessed we all are to have them in our lives. It was a beautiful weekend of holy encounters surrounded by spectacular grounds with delicious meals! You have heard me go on and on about retreat experiences through the years!

I have attended every retreat since (six in total). Some of us just cannot stay away! I tell everyone I'm a fixture! I still stay in touch with people I met at that first retreat and many others I have met through the years. How blessed I am with their presence in my life!

I attended MDC's Conference in August 2017 in Irvine, California. Wonderful speakers! But my absolute favorite takeaway was meeting many people who used to attend the Livestream meetings in person. They were like celebrities to me and to many others! Another incredible experience!

If you visited my home, you would find books, plaques, calendars, table tents, cards, clings, bracelets, **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazines, etc., throughout. If MDC's store has it, I probably do too! Whenever I reach out to MDC, I always get a personal response from phone calls to emails to snail mail. Their outreach and the services they provide are valued and cherished by me and so many of us. I'm also a **Holy Helper** because I deeply appreciate all that MDC provides and makes available for us — for this world.

So, here's to 45 years and more to come, MDC! You are the very best. The Course reminds us that miracle workers are needed now more than ever. We walk with God in perfect holiness, and love is the way we walk in gratitude. Thank you, MDC. I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, walking this miracle odyssey with you!

—SandyB in Bellingham, Washington



SandyB with MDC staff member Bill Kasal at The Holy Encounter Retreat.

Share a Miracle

Retreating Into Safety with the Holy Spirit

by Janet Black (with Dona Weitz)

This column shares the everyday “miracles” or, as *A Course in Miracles* says, the “shifts in our perception” that are constantly taking place in our lives to remind us of our unity and love. We invite readers to share their “miracles” with us.

It wasn't OUR plan to let anything disrupt our journey to Miracle Distribution Center's Holy Encounter Retreat last August. Our plan was to drive — three of us — and joyously spend the weekend with other dedicated *A Course in Miracles* students. We knew each other mostly via Zoom meetings, and I felt very open to in-person holy encounter time. We'd carpool from Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Chatsworth, California.

But on departure day, the plan began to shift. A hurricane named Hilary appeared off the Pacific coast, its path headed directly for the retreat center. Also, our planned driver from Santa Barbara was struggling with fatigue from a heavy workload. I was wondering if we should go or not. But stalwart Dona was ready to take over driving and get there ASAP.

So our original driver chose to seek the rest he needed, with our blessing, and Dona and I got in the car and headed for the retreat, knowing and feeling we would be safe and guided in the moment and looking forward to meeting up with our friend Barbara, also from the Zoom meeting. Uppermost in our minds: “Step back in faith and let truth lead the way. You know not where you go. But One Who knows goes with you. Let Him lead you with the rest.” (W-155.10) In other words, the Holy Spirit took over as our trip planner.

The greeting and reunion upon arriving at the RW Ranch Retreat Center was so sweet and joyous. Seeing friends from previous retreats led to hugs and chats and then the opening night talk with the fearless Beverly Hutchinson McNeff. We dove into the Course. I got regular text updates on weather conditions from my husband, Jim. But the skies were beautiful; how could there be danger? That was Friday night.

By Saturday morning, weather reports were getting a bit more insistent. But

again, we all agreed to stay and be guided in the moment and only leave if that felt like the Spirit's direction. By mid-afternoon, the staff at the retreat center said they would be closing the facility after dinner. Their concern and decision then determined our next step. After a strengthening “traveling prayer” by Beverly, we said our goodbyes, and with Dona behind the wheel, we started our three-hour drive home. Again, that was OUR plan. The Holy Spirit had something else planned for us.



Paul McNeff, Dona Weitz, Janet Black, and Beverly at The Holy Encounter Retreat in 2023.

Soon after leaving, a gas station caught Dona's eye, and she insisted we stop and fill the tank. This was a significant decision, based on what was coming, and was surely the Holy Spirit's doing.

Two hours later, on the freeway, we hit a metal object which neither of us had seen. We could hear the left front tire loudly disintegrating. Then the car gave off warning signs and beeps, and we pulled as far over to the shoulder as possible next to some white barriers indicating road repair but still somewhat on the freeway's edge. We did what you do: we called AAA (seriously grateful for cell phone technology), gave our location and story, and were promised we'd have help in about an hour. The first angel to stop was a patrol officer who helped us move further off the road to a safer spot. The second angel was a driver who stopped to ask if we were okay. Apparently, more angels were on the way, but they seemed to be taking their time.

During that time, Dona's guidance to fill the tank assured us that we would have power, lights, music, and a dashboard

phone connection while we waited. Dona and I could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit protecting both of us from fear and danger. Clear instructions? Just wait. The promised rescue in one hour stretched into two hours, then THREE. But the Spirit's message continued: All is well; you are safe, just wait. So, we told each other stories, listened to music, laughed a lot, and watched traffic whizzing by in complete peace. We rested, perfectly trusting in Spirit's care for those three hours. When either of us was tempted to worry, the other would bring on the laughter, and worry would disappear. We were guided by Spirit: “Today we have one Guide to lead us on... we will give this day to Him with no reserve at all.” (W-233.2)

After three hours passed, Angel number three arrived, Darnell from AAA. His long dreadlocks, which he periodically flipped out of his way, seemed to be angel's wings, temporarily folded to accomplish his task. He told us he took this job because he wanted to be able to help people. His kindness, care, and big smile were so sweet. He promptly had us loaded up, off the freeway, tire changed, and with a big wave goodbye, we were on our way again and home not long after.

As I said at the beginning, I anticipated that the Holy Spirit had a holy encounter prepared for me, and this was it in spades!! Dona and I were Mighty Traveling Companions! And now deeply connected.

We got to Ventura well after midnight, as the storm finally caught up with us, and the rain started. Then, the next day, we had a lovely earthquake just for emphasis. I kept thinking the ego was obviously desperate for attention, throwing all this stuff at us, and we just laughed it off. This powerful lesson in trust now rests so deeply within us both. As it says in Lesson 233: “I will step back and merely follow You. Be You the Guide, and I the follower who questions not the wisdom of the Infinite.” Amen. ❖

for what we see, then we can also make a change. It's not beyond us.

Even though transformation is not beyond us, it is not of us alone; we cannot do it without the Holy Spirit's help. This is a crucial caveat. We cannot heal alone. As the Course reminds us, we made the problem that seems outside of us and beyond the ability of poor little us. This powerlessness is so etched in our minds that the Course refers to it as our "ancient over-learning," which echoes the words we hear way too often

in our minds: This is too hard to learn, too difficult to apply, and maybe all this God stuff isn't real anyway.

Here's how the Course puts it...

"Learning is an ability you made and gave yourself. It was not made to do the Will of God, but to uphold a wish that it could be opposed, and that a will apart from it was yet more real than it. And this has learning sought to demonstrate, and you have learned what it was made to teach. Now does your ancient over-learning stand implacable before the Voice of truth, and teach you that its lessons are not true; too hard to learn, too difficult to see, and too opposed to what is really true. Yet you will learn them, for their learning is the only purpose for your learning skill the Holy Spirit sees in all the world. His simple lessons in forgiveness have a power mightier than yours, because they call from God and from your Self to you." (T-31.1.5)

The Course starts right off by telling us that learning is something we made up. This really doesn't make much sense in our world, where we are obsessed with

learning because, according to statistics, we're getting dumber and dumber! This, however, makes excellent sense from the Course's perspective.

If we are a creation of God, then we are like Him. The ego would like to draw from this statement that if we are like God, then He is like us, as petty, judgmental, and hateful as we can be. But the saving distinction that the Course offers is that all those twisted images we have made ourselves into are not the truth; we still remain as God created us, not what we made of ourselves.

If this is the case, and we are assured it is, what would there be to learn if we were like Him? We would have all knowledge since knowledge is of God. But, as the Course tells us, we have fallen asleep to that reality, even though that does not change the truth one

little bit. All truth and knowledge abide within us, awaiting our willingness to turn away from the lies of the ego and embrace the miracle of forgiveness that is always present.

As we all know, just because the clouds might dim our view of the sun on a cloudy day, that does not mean the sun is not there. The sun is simply not in our awareness. The same is true of knowledge; we have all the answers we need, but we must clear away the "clouds" (illusions of unworthiness, fear, guilt, attack, etc.) we believe in. The Course tells us we must unlearn the mistaken thoughts so the truth can be revealed. It was said that Michelangelo sculpted his masterpieces in much the same way. When asked how he created his incredible sculptures in marble, he said that he simply chipped away everything that was not the masterpiece.



"When asked how he created his incredible sculptures in marble, he said that he simply chipped away everything that was not the masterpiece."

It's now time for us to "chip away" everything that is not the masterpiece of us! That would be all our "ancient over-learning," such as I'm not smart enough, I'm incapable, I'm unworthy, I'm alone and scared, I'm not sure what to do, and the list goes on. Our "ancient over-learning" can also take the form of separating thoughts, as well. Even though diminishing concepts of ourselves subtly imply thoughts of separation from others, it is not as easy for us to see that the reason we think we are guilty and incapable, lost and alone is because of the hate we have for the "others" out there who have taken something from us. And yet, we are actually looking in a perceptual mirror and seeing ourselves as both victim and victimizer. The Course would tell us neither is true. Yes, you are the image you see without, but only as a way to lead you back to the truth of the masterpiece you truly are.

We have had faith in the lies of the world for so long that it seems almost impossible to make a change now. But we are studying *A Course in Miracles*, so perhaps we need to believe and practice what we are studying! Remember, Michelangelo didn't sculpt the David overnight or paint the Sistine Chapel on a weekend; it took time. He focused on the masterpiece, not the distractions. Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness and

a few lost years before we hear about his teachings. So, what if it has taken us a while to reach this point? We're here now, aren't we? We are at least entertaining the idea that there might be a better way than the path of hate and destruction. According to the Course, that is enough to start the process of dismantling the ego thinking of separation. The more we practice, the less hold the "ancient over-learning" will have on us.

In the miracle principles that begin the Course text, we read...

"49. The miracle makes no distinction among degrees of misperception. It is a device for perception correction,



"Remember how Hansel and Gretel put out breadcrumbs to find their way home?"

effective quite apart from either the degree or the direction of the error. This is its true indiscriminateness.

50. The miracle compares what you have made with creation, accepting what is in accord with it as true, and rejecting what is out of accord as false.

39. The miracle dissolves error because the Holy Spirit identifies error as false or unreal. This is the same as saying that by perceiving light, darkness automatically disappears."

How powerful! We are not asked to deny this world, our judgments, the judgments of others, or the seeming impossibility that peace and healing are possible here — there are no distinctions among degrees of misperception; one is not more difficult than another. We are only asked that all our illusions be brought to truth and that we be willing to allow the infinite power and knowledge of God's Love to reign again in our minds. We are willing to let truth, not error, light, not darkness, fill our minds. But how do we get there when we seem so caught in the "darkness"?

Remember how Hansel and Gretel put out breadcrumbs to find their way home? Well, we have "breadcrumbs" that can help us find our way home in the middle of our crazy lives. They're called miracles.

"43. Miracles arise from a miraculous state of mind, or a state of miracle-readiness.

15. Each day should be devoted to miracles. The purpose of time is to enable you to learn how to use time constructively. It is thus a teaching device and a means to an end. Time will cease when it is no longer useful in facilitating learning."

It's time we focus on the truth, not the lie, and that we devote time to miracles. Let us clearly look at our lives and world and ask that the Holy Spirit be our eyes, ears, hands, feet, and words. This declaration may need to be said many times during the day, but that's how we create a miracle-readiness state of mind; we focus on it. Then, we devote time to it.

As the Course tells us, the only use for time or learning is the one that the Holy Spirit sees in it. His message is not one of

condemnation for needing to use learning, time, or miracles because we have forgotten Who we are. His message is one of infinite patience.

I often relate our spiritual growth to cooking a meal in a crock pot. If you have ever cooked using a crock pot, you know it cooks VERY slowly, but the dishes that come from that slow cooking are incredibly delicious. Because it cooks so slowly, it takes a long time to see or smell any results, but we all know it's working at the intended rate. I remember one time I made scalloped potatoes in a crock pot. The average cooking time in the oven is 45 minutes; these crock pot potatoes took four hours! But they were delicious! We

are all crock pots cooking in our spiritual growth at the perfect rate for us. Some of us may be on medium or high, and some of us may be on low or simmer, but when we're done (and that IS inevitable), we'll be deliciously at peace!

Let us look at whatever challenges happen in our personal or global lives as the same opportunity for God to occupy our minds. As this new year begins, I encourage you to continue your own spiritual practice with the Course and remember that Miracle Distribution Center has many services that can be truly helpful to you to occupy your mind in a healing way. I invite you to check them out on our website at



"I often relate our spiritual growth to cooking a meal in a crock pot. If you have ever cooked using a crock pot, you know it cooks VERY slowly..."

miraclecenter.org. I also want to offer a wonderful workbook lesson that you can use to occupy your mind. It's lesson 233...

**I give my life to God
to guide today.**

"Father, I give You all my thoughts today. I would have none of mine. In place of them, give me Your Own. I give You all my acts as well, that I may do Your Will instead of seeking goals which cannot be obtained, and wasting time in vain imaginings. Today I come to You. I will step back and merely follow You. Be You the Guide, and I the follower who questions not the wisdom of the Infinite, nor Love whose tenderness I cannot comprehend, but which is yet Your perfect gift to me.

"Today we have one Guide to lead us on. And as we walk together, we will give this day to Him with no reserve at all. This is His day. And so it is a day of countless gifts and mercies unto us."

To help you keep this thought by your side, we have created a wristband with this lesson's title. I hope you will get one or cut this lesson out and put it in your wallet, purse, on the refrigerator, or wherever you often look. May it be a reminder of not only your willingness to let God occupy your mind but also that you are so loved and precious to Him, and that He has never left your side. ❖

Available from the Center

Keep This Thought by Your Side

This high-quality silicone wristband reminds us to give our lives to God to guide in red with deposited lettering. Visit our website to see all the available wristbands.

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click on "Store" then "Wristbands"



The HOLY ENCOUNTER

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2024

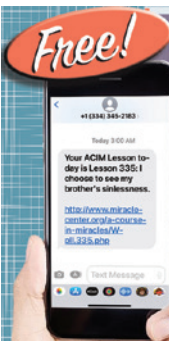
In This Issue...

- What's Occupying Your Mind?
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- ...And So Much More!



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