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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



JULY / AUGUST 2020

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

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



An Opinion That Heals

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

Over forty years ago, the Center was founded for the purpose of sharing the transformative message of *A Course in Miracles*.

The Course is not another religion or dogma; it is a path to healing our lives right now. It is a tool to teach us how to be in the world but not of it.

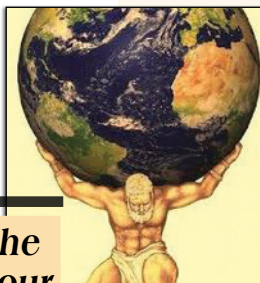
It tells us that peace is not just a nice idea, but our right. To experience the peace that we all are truly seeking, however, we have to want it more than our problems, more than our need to be right, and more than our precious opinions and judgments.

“Most of us have felt ‘the weight of the world on our shoulders’ at one time or another, and most of the time it is because of all the opinions and judgments we carry around.”

We just don’t have all the facts when we make those opinions and judgments. And, even if we do have a lot of what we think are accurate facts, we don’t really know people’s “back story.” Therefore, we really do not know what makes people act the way they do. The Course doesn’t tell us that we should give up judgment; it tells us that we actually

cannot judge.

“Remember how many times you thought you knew all the ‘facts’ you needed for judgment, and how wrong you were! Is there anyone who has not had this experience? Would you know how many times you merely thought you were right, without ever realizing you were wrong? Why would you choose such an arbitrary basis for decision making? Wisdom is not judgment; it is the



relinquishment of judgment. Make then but one more judgment. It is this: There is Someone with you Whose judgment is perfect. He does know all the facts; past, present and to come. He does know all the effects of His judgment on everyone

and everything involved in any way. And He is wholly fair to everyone, for there is no distortion in His perception.

Therefore lay judgment down, not with regret but with a sigh of gratitude. Now are you free of a burden so great that you could merely stagger and fall down beneath it.”
(M-10:4)

Many times in my life I have felt like Atlas. Remember him? In Greek mythology, Atlas was condemned by Zeus to carry the world on his shoulders. Most of us have felt “the weight of the world on our shoulders” at one time or another, and most of the time it is

Continued on page 14

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 live stream meetings at www.miraclecenter.org

Miracles in the Time of Covid

An update on how MDC has responded

“MDC’s work is needed in the world right now.” – Jamie in Illinois

On March 19th an executive order was issued by the governor of California: In order to help stop the spread of the coronavirus, all non-essential businesses in the state were to close. As a non-profit organization that has served the community of students of *A Course in Miracles* continuously since 1978, what were we to do? Could we continue to offer our free services without a physical headquarters? These questions launched us on an exciting journey of discovery, and in the process reminded us of a spiritual truth – only minds can truly join; bodies cannot.



A hurried trip to our offices on the night of Thursday, March 19th, allowed us to grab as many items as we could. The next day we set up remote computer software to allow all of our staff members to access their computers. Over the years, of course, many of our computer applications had already migrated to the “cloud,” and this was our opportunity to move the remaining ones over. Shipments were redirected

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

For more information go to
www.miraclecenter.org or call 714-632-9005

● **"Many thanks for keeping things going during this worldwide appearance of trouble. I am especially grateful for Beverly and those**



behind the scenes who continue to make the livestream meetings available."

We thank Millicent in Tampa, FL for her words of support. We continue to livestream new meetings each week during this tenuous time in our world's history. The message of the Course has such a powerful gift of healing to offer us during this time, and we are grateful to continue offering its message for free each **Wednesday evening at 7:00pm** (Pacific Time) at our site. We encourage you to join us, but if you are unable to view at that time, we invite you to become a subscriber to watch at your convenience and have access to over 250 archived meetings.

● **"What a great message for everyone today, especially on the road."** We want to thank Newton in Prescott, AZ for his support as a *Holy Helper*! When you become a new *Holy Helper* with an ongoing commitment of \$15 or more each month, you not only assure that the work of the Center will

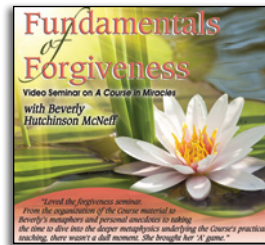


continue, but we will send you a license plate frame with the quote

from *A Course in Miracles*: "Teach only love, for that is what you are." This frame was exclusively designed and created by your Miracle Distribution Center family.

● **Continue your studies of the Course** at your convenience with these on-demand Seminars! We currently have two seminars on the principles of *A Course in Miracles* with Beverly McNeff for immediate viewing. Each

seminar is six hours long with each having a unique focus. **Getting God's Guidance** offers the Course's look at how we can experience God's Will for us, and the **Fundamentals of Forgiveness** shares the Course's approach to its chosen path for our awakening. Beverly has a unique ability to cut through the complexity of the Course and put it in terms that will inspire your mind and touch your heart. Find out how to access these on our site or call the Center.



● **"Sending a gift in gratitude for the E-cards, which I use to spread hope and love."** This is how Deb in Baldwinsville, NY has been physically distancing, but not socially distancing. Just like Deb, you can send a FREE ACIM e-card with a thought from the Course electronically to friends and family now! We have a variety of beautiful, full color e-cards with Course quotes for every occasion, so check it out. It's easy and FREE at our website!



● **Giving a truly meaningful Gift** Here's what many students of the Course have done: Given a tax-deductible donation to MDC in someone's honor or memory. If you would like to give in such a way, send your donation and request, and we will send him, her or the family a personalized letter acknowledging

your appreciation and support. It's a wonderful honor for that dedicated someone or their family. And, what a blessing it will be to those the Center serves, for your donation will go to support its free services! **Gifts in memory of...** my beloved wife and best friend, Robin McBee, I would like to make this monthly commitment as a *Holy Helper*. This loving gesture is from James McBee in New Jersey.

● **"In quiet I receive God's Word today."** This lesson (125) is the doorway to healing that is promised us. We cannot overcome this world by fighting against it, but by stepping back to receive God's Word that will transcend all illusion, no matter how powerful it may seem in our minds. It is time we correct our perception so the world and all people can finally be released. We invite you to join us in seeking the quiet that will release our healing by uniting daily in prayerful thought through the Miracle Prayer Ministry. **Every day at 4:30pm** (Pacific Time), we invite you to stop, still your mind, and join us. It doesn't take more than a moment to give the gift of healing release. If you have a prayer thought for yourself or a loved one, please share it with us. Thoughts for:

July: In quiet I receive God's Word today.

(Lesson 125)

August: My grievances hide the light of the world in me. (Lesson 69)

September: Forgiveness offers everything I want. (Lesson 122)

Thoughts in the Miracle Prayer Ministry 2020

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: I am the holy Son of God Himself. (191)

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

March: Light and joy and peace abide in me. (63)

April: God is the strength in which I trust. (47)

May: God's Will for me is perfect happiness. (101)

June: I choose the joy of God instead of pain. (190)

July: In quiet I receive God's Word today. (125)

August: My grievances hide the light of the world in me. (69)

September: Forgiveness offers everything I want. (122)

October: I share God's Will for happiness for me. (102)

November: Love is the way I walk in gratitude. (193)

December: I am the holy Son of God Himself. (191)

Please send your prayer requests to: prayer@miraclecenter.org Include a postal address for a personal response.

call **1-714-632-9005** or at **miraclecenter.org**

It's Here!

Request your **FREE** full-color bookmark today which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2020.

**Convenient
Payment Plans Available**
SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2020

Holy Encounter Retreat



This retreat is designed to help students to not just talk about A Course in Miracles but to deeply experience 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!"



**Register Today!
Space is
Limited**



"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 weekend 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.



Registration begins at \$549 and includes all retreat activities, six organic meals, and lodging.



To register visit **www.miraclecenter.org** or call **1-800-359-ACIM (2246)**





Miracle Musings...

His Truth Is Marching On

by Paul McNeff

"Christ having made us gloriously free — stand fast and do not again be hampered with the yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

"Let, then, your dedication be to the eternal, and learn how not to interfere with it and make it slave to time. For what you think you do to the eternal you do to you. Whom God created as His Son is slave to nothing, being lord of all, along with his Creator. You can enslave a body, but an idea is free, incapable of being kept in prison or limited in any way except by the mind that thought it. For it remains joined to its source, which is its jailer or its liberator, according to which it chooses as its purpose for itself." (T-19.1.16:1)

I can't breathe!... Mama!" These are the last words that George Floyd uttered lying face down on the pavement in a lethal stranglehold under the knee of Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, while three other officers lent a hand. Eight minutes and forty-six seconds was all it took to snuff out the life of a man who had been placed

eventually took stands against slavery, sadly, in the end, they both acquiesced, saying the issue of ending slavery was for another place and time.

"I can't breathe!... Mama! These are the last words that George Floyd uttered laying face down on the pavement in a lethal stranglehold under the knee of Minneapolis police..."



under arrest for allegedly passing counterfeit money.

This event and many other unjustified killings of black people have recently sparked protests in all fifty states of our union, and renewed calls for equal justice and the purging of systemic racism out of the structure of American justice. Our country has arrived at a pivotal inflection moment where a groundswell of Americans are demanding change.

It has been 401 years since the first African slave disembarked from a Dutch ship at Point Comfort, Virginia. Most of our founding fathers, including Washington and Jefferson, owned slaves. Although they both

In order to preserve the Union during our bloodiest of all wars, the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, issued the Emancipation Proclamation which declared "that all persons held as

slaves" within the rebellious states "are, and henceforward shall be free." With one stroke of a pen, slaves were set free. What a monumental step forward in our country's history.

Social change is slow, however, as another 101 years passed by before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted, outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Fifty-six years later, with the murder of

George Floyd, Ahmaud Aubery, Breonna Taylor, and too many others, America is still struggling with racism, "America's original sin," in all its dehumanizing forms.

Freeing the slaves was one thing, but

freeing the mind, where the roots of slavery exist in the ego's voice, is where real transformation needs to happen. True liberty comes not just from freeing the body by the stroke of a pen, but also by the freeing of the mind from enslaving thoughts — a true emancipation of the spirit.

Biblical teaching offers insight into this: "the spirit of the law gives life, but the letter kills." A *Course in Miracles* teaches, "You can enslave a body, but an idea is free, incapable of being kept in prison or limited in any way except by the mind that thought it." (ibid) We can free a body, but that will not prove to be one's ultimate liberation until we practice the spiritual truth of freeing our brother from our judgments, and seeing him as ourselves in the light of oneness.

Several years back I read a very enlightening book, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. It is one of three Frederick Douglass autobiographies by the former



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slave, fiery orator, and impassioned abolitionist. I was incredibly moved by this man's remarkable journey to freedom. In 1838, after twenty years of experiencing unspeakable atrocities of the American

slavery system, at age twenty, Frederick Douglass ran away from a Maryland plantation and eventually made it to New York City. Shortly thereafter, he settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he, with the help of

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

abolitionists, began the life of a free man.

Reading Douglas' autobiography illuminated how cruel, unjust, and dehumanizing the institution of slavery was, but we do not often see the other side of the slavery equation – to have a slave you need a slaver. Little do we talk about the disposition of the slaver and the downward spiral from basic human decency which one must journey to participate in such a hideous institution.

At the tender age of eight, Douglas found himself "loaned out" as a house slave to a family in Baltimore where one of his duties was to be a slave companion to his master's son. The son's mother, mistress to Douglas, had never owned a slave and therefore was a novice at it.

At the beginning of their relationship, Douglas' mistress actually treated him like a human being, with kindness, respect, and dignity. Being naive in her new role and acting out of a natural kindness, she began teaching him to read and write. Douglas had never experienced such nurturing and care. But it abruptly and dramatically ended after the master of the house, a more experienced slaver than his wife, discovered how humanely she had been treating the young slave, and he immediately forbade her from dispensing charity of any kind toward Douglas.



Slave holders held fast to their despotic principles. Slaves were to be treated as chattel and were subhuman and inferior. The slaver's mantra: Never educate a slave, maintain their ignorance, and treat them harshly lest they rise up in rebellion. If you gave a slave an inch, he would surely take a mile.

In a 180-degree shift, Douglas' mistress now succumbed to being cruel, unjust and just plain mean. Douglas writes: "My mistress was a kind and tenderhearted woman; and in the simplicity of her soul she commenced, when I first went

"Being naive in her new role and acting out of a natural kindness, she began teaching him to read and write. Douglas had never experienced such nurturing and care."



to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one human being ought to treat another. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me, though. When I went there, she was a pious, warm, and tenderhearted woman. Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence the tender heart became stone, and the lamb-like disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness."

In Douglas' story, where do we see ourselves? At times, perhaps we see ourselves in both roles, the slave and the slaver. The Course vividly teaches the principle of slave and slaver as parallel to the terms of jailer and prisoner.

"Who can be born again in Christ but him who has forgiven everyone he sees or thinks of or imagines? Who could be set free while he imprisons anyone? A jailer [slaver] is not free, for he is bound together with his

prisoner [slave]. He [slaver] must be sure that he [slave] does not escape, and so he [slaver] spends his time in keeping watch on him [slave]. The bars that limit him [slave] become the world in which his

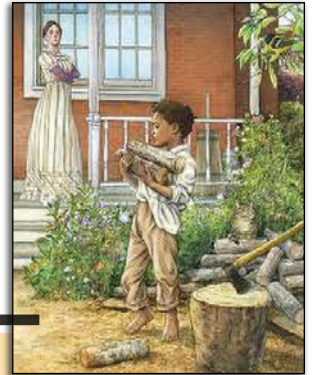
jailer [slaver] lives, along with him [slave]. And it is on his freedom that the way to liberty depends for both of them." (W-pl.192.8:1)

"As the Emancipation Proclamation was to the freedom of slaves, let us join together in declaring our spiritual Emancipation Proclamation..."

"When I went there, she was a pious, warm, and tenderhearted woman. Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities."

To become masters of our spiritual kingdom we must be willing to take the steps to not only free the person we are enslaving, but also the thoughts that are causing the enslavement. This is not difficult to do, but it does take vigilance. All it requires is a little willingness to get out of the way, and let that latent truth of love within us emerge like a butterfly from its chrysalis. To repeat the Course teaching: "Let, then, your dedication be to the eternal, and learn how not to interfere with it and make it slave to time. For what you think you do to the eternal you do to you. Whom God created as His Son is slave to nothing, being lord of all, along with his Creator." (ibid)

As the Emancipation Proclamation was to the freedom of slaves, let us join together in declaring our



spiritual Emancipation Proclamation . . . "that all persons (children of God, you and me) held by enslaving thoughts by the deceitful state of the ego, are, and

henceforward shall be free."

Several years ago, I experienced a series of events with a close friend that caused us a lot of pain. The more we would try to reconcile, the further we would experience a chasm that separated us from enjoying the rich relationship we once had. Finally, I came to a place last year when I was guided to let it go, surrender it to God, and bless my friend every time he entered my consciousness. It's as if Spirit was saying to me, "do not enslave this brother with any past thoughts or 'should-haves,' or the need to have him take the first step toward me to begin the reconciliation process." I then began to hold this prayer every day on our behalf. I cannot say outward healing has occurred yet, but I have learned to step back and release those enslaving thoughts the moment they creep in.

George Floyd's killing has focused the

Change Your Mind Change Your Life

All You Need Is Love

by Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane V. Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D.



The Beatles famously tutored us that you “Can’t Buy Me Love,” and science tells us that you cannot really measure love, only aspects of it. We are told in countless ways that you do not find love, but love finds you. If you cannot buy real love, and you cannot actually measure it, and you cannot seek and successfully find it, then what is it that we are talking about when we talk of love?

We can speak of different kinds of love, like that of a mother or father for a child, the child for the parents, the love of siblings or friends or country or other places and even things. But let’s look, for the moment, at romantic love and the love that brings us together in intimate relationship with each other. Intimacy has sometimes been translated as “in-to-me-see” — a desire and a request, a permission and a trust, to look inside oneself and one another to form an emotional union

or bond.

Science has attempted to dissect romantic love into aspects of itself. There are distinct, measurable, biochemical changes in our brain chemistry when we are in love, depending on the stage. We can experience any or all of the three stages of romantic love, which include passion, attraction and, if we are lucky, enduring love in long-term attachment.

Some relationships are fleeting, yet indelible; others last for longer periods, but not for life. And then there is the relationship almost all of us dream of and aspire to. It holds all

“Perhaps above and beyond the love relationships we have with others, the most important one, ultimately, is the one we have with ourselves.”

three stages: passion, attraction, and long-term commitment. In the best of relationships the love is strong enough that when the thrill is gone, there remains a satisfying and deep friendship and companionship that supports the ebbing of personal strengths and the rise of vulnerabilities too numerous to ever predict.

Changes in the status of love in our lives can be very challenging and have a definite effect on the state of our happiness. We want to hold on to the love of those we have, and yet that may not always be the wisest or healthiest of choices. The Dalai Lama inspires us to “give the ones you love wings to fly, roots to come back, and reasons to stay.”

In long-term relationships we measure our happiness by the distance between where we are now and where our egos want us to be. That is, the only way we can know happiness

is by the choice to love fully and to be in this present moment right here and right now. Any desire, need or imagining that we are elsewhere drives us away and often into the past or future, neither of which are accessible in the now. That does not mean we do not make changes in our lives or in our love relationships. But in order for us to do so, it helps to begin by being very present and very honest in each and every moment.

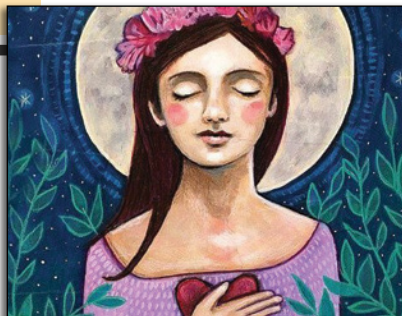
Interpretation Is Everything

Perhaps above and beyond the love relationships we have with others, the most important one, ultimately, is the one we have with ourselves. The relationship we have with our self is a deeply personal and dynamic one, albeit oftentimes unconscious. Do we know why we do what we do? Why do we say what we say? Why do we act and react in certain ways? If we hope to connect meaningfully with others, we surely need to first connect with ourselves. We are the most important love relationship we will ever have.

If we do not like ourselves, we will undoubtedly not like many other people. If we hold anger within ourselves, more than likely we will find ourselves angry with others. If we find it difficult to trust others even when that lack of trust is unwarranted, there is surely a place within ourselves that we do not trust. If we are guilty about unresolved actions we have or have not taken in the past, we will definitely project out that guilt onto someone else in the present or in the future. And if we refuse to forgive and continue to have even one unhealed relationship from the past, it will surely show itself and interfere with our love along the way.

Why is this so?

There is a fascinating and generally

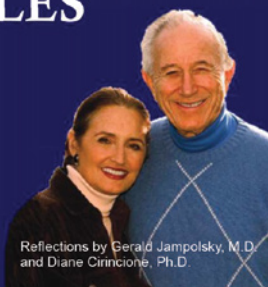


Daily Reflections on

A COURSE IN MIRACLES



The Vibe Mobile App
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Reflections by Gerald Jampolsky, M.D.
and Diane Cirincione, Ph.D.

Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D., international lecturers and bestselling authors, share their insights and experiences in applying the principles of *A Course in Miracles* in our world. Diane’s therapeutic counseling practice specializes in applying ACIM to all aspects and situations in life. Their books are available from the Center at www.miraclecenter.org

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A Change Is Gonna Come

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

I grew up in Oregon, but, as a child, our family traveled a lot. My dad was a salesman who traveled all across the United States. He would always wait until the summer, though, to travel to California so our family could go with him. We loved going to California because that meant we could go to Disneyland (it was the *only* Disneyland when we were growing up). My brother and I planned our trip to Disneyland down to the minute, so we could hit the rides we loved the best. We even saved our unused tickets from our ticket books (remember those!) from year to year so we could use them on the upcoming trip.

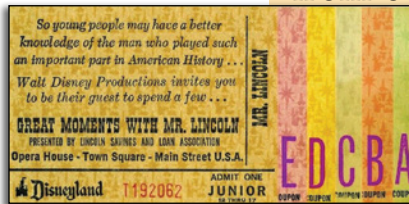
Our parents loved to indulge our planning, and they excitedly followed our itinerary for Disneyland. But, at the end of the long day, my dad always wanted to make our last attraction be "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln." It was on the way out, so it was the perfect ending. My brother and I were not necessarily that excited about the attraction, but we "indulged" our dad's itinerary — plus, the seats in the air-conditioned theater were soft and comfortable, and by then our feet were tired.

I am grateful that my dad made this our tradition, because the speech the audio-animatronic Lincoln gave stuck with me. It was a compilation of a few speeches Lincoln presented over his fifty-six years of life, and what impressed me was when he spoke about our liberty and what could bring this country to its knees. He said...

"The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in want of one. We all declare for

liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing.

What constitutes the bulwark of our... liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling sea coasts,... These are not our reliance against... tyranny... Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in our bosoms. Our defense is in the preservation of the



spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors.

At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some trans-Atlantic military giant, to step the ocean, and crush us at a blow?
Never!

"It was a compilation of a few speeches Lincoln presented over his fifty-six years of life, and what impressed me was when he spoke about our liberty and what could bring this country to its knees."



All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined,... could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track

on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years.

At what point then is the danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reaches us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we ourselves must be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men, we must live through all times, or die by suicide.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false

accusations against us, nor frightened from it by the menaces of destruction to the Government nor of dungeons to ourselves.

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it."

Wow! I still am deeply moved by Lincoln's words. We are our own destruction or salvation. "Nothing outside yourself can save you; nothing outside yourself can give you peace." (W-70.2)

According to *A Course in Miracles* we either awaken to the truth of love and unity or we remain asleep in our nightmares where we weave a world of destruction filled with fear and separation. As the Course so powerfully says...

"There is no part of Heaven you can take and weave into illusions. Nor is there one illusion you can enter Heaven with. A savior cannot be a judge, nor mercy condemnation. And vision cannot damn, but only bless. Whose function is to save, will save. How He will do it is beyond your understanding, but when must be your choice. For time you made, and time you can command. You are no more a slave to time than to the world you made." (T-22.II.8)

In this fast-moving time of change, let us not forget that the change has been coming for a long time. Just like Sam Cooke's iconic 1964 civil rights song, "A Change Is Gonna Come," this has been a slow evolutionary process, but the time is now. It has always been now, in truth, but it seems we had to catch up to this truth.

Lincoln said it nearly 200 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. marched for it nearly 60 years ago, and Black America has been entitled to it since the first black slaves were brought to Jamestown, Virginia in 1619.

All of us can feel the change — it is palpable. Something is different about these marches now. We see people of all colors marching together. In many cases, those protesting for equality in small rural communities in the South are all white. For far too long, the inequities in our broken justice system have been the persecutors of the races and minorities, but now a *change is gonna come*. We see, in some cases, the representatives of that system taking a knee or marching in solidarity.

Yes, a *change is gonna come*, because we are the change.

A *Course in Miracles* tells us that only we can make the change. We have to decide how long we will live in the darkness of the ego's fearful thinking, afraid of every "other" out there — needing to hide or attack those we see as different or don't understand — or will we... "arise in glory, and allow the light in [us] to shine upon the world throughout the day." (W-237)

Martin Luther King Jr., said...

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

King's thought is echoed in the Course's truth...

"Your picture of the world can only mirror what is within. The source of neither light nor darkness can be found without. Grievances darken your mind, and you look out on a darkened world. Forgiveness lifts the darkness, reasserts your will, and lets you look upon a world of light. We have repeatedly

emphasized that the barrier of grievances is easily passed, and cannot stand between you and your salvation. The reason is very simple. Do you really want to be in hell? Do you really want to weep and suffer and die?" (W-73.5)

The Course rings out: it is our thinking that keeps us captive, but it is this same thinking that is our salvation. The thoughts



"Lincoln said it nearly 200 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. marched for it nearly 60 years ago, and Black America has been entitled to it since the first black slaves were brought to Jamestown, Virginia in 1619."

of light and love are much stronger than those of darkness and fear. It is time

we use those truths to work through us through the power of forgiveness. Forgive-

ness reasserts your will and your power because unity and love are stronger than hate and division.

None of us want to live in hell, and hell is the thought of separation. We all live in hell until everyone is free. We all weep and suffer and die until forgiveness spreads across this world.

What does this mean for you right now? It means pray, let forgiveness rest on your anger, and then follow the guidance given you by the Voice for God.

We see the reflection of this guidance as

many have been moved to speak out and to march in peace and solidarity. And, we need to vote. We have to look and meet illusion on the level of illusion and lift it to the truth. That is the real message of the second coming. It

Continued on page 10

Keep Connected to the Inspiration

Every week, MDC sends out an e-newsletter of inspiration and information. The article "A Change Is Gonna Come" is one such piece of inspiration. This particular article received so many responses that we wanted to share it with readers of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** who might have missed it. Thanks to Nicholas in Basking Ridge, New Jersey for the heartfelt comment.

"I love 'A Change Is Gonna Come' and have suggested that it be sent to all ACIM'ers in our group of 30+. Your blending of you, your family, Lincoln, and ACIM is powerful, from the one to the One! We are all One. You are Inspired and you Inspire! Thank you. God Bless you!"

We are honored to be able to offer support and inspiration through so many different formats: on computer via our livestream (which, if you are a subscriber, can be viewed on-demand at your convenience, with access to our 250 meeting archive), on our website, and also through the printed version of our magazine, **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER**.

Your support of MDC's free services is always appreciated and is tax-deductible. Thank you!

If you would like to receive the inspirational weekly emails, please send your email address to MDC: **info@miraclecenter.org** or give us a call: **714-632-9005**

is not the end of the world in fear and destruction, but in love and healing. This change from fear to love, from separation to unity may seem fearful to some, but it is the end of fear. *A change is gonna come*, but the Holy Spirit needs your voice...



“We see the reflection of this guidance as many have been moved to speak out and to march in peace and solidarity. And, we need to vote. We have to look and meet illusion on the level of illusion and lift it to the truth.”

“The Second Coming is the one event in time which time itself can not affect. For every one who ever came to die, or yet will come or who is present now, is equally released from what he made. In this equality is Christ restored as one Identity, in which the Sons of God acknowledge that they all are one. And God the Father smiles upon His Son, His one creation and His only joy.

Pray that the Second Coming will be soon, but do not rest with that. It needs your eyes and ears and hands and feet. It needs your voice. And most of all it needs your willingness. Let us rejoice that we can do God’s Will, and join together in its holy light. Behold, the Son of God is one in us, and we can reach our Father’s Love through Him.”

(W-p11.9.4-5)

This change, this second coming needs our “eyes and ears and hands and feet. It needs [our] voice. And most of all it needs [our] willingness. Let us rejoice that we can do God’s Will, and join together in its holy light.”

(ibid) Hallelujah, *change is gonna come!*



Update: Prison Project

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



The following letter comes from Jason, who is incarcerated in a low-security facility in Minnesota. His connection with the Center has allowed him to feel, as he said, “touched by God.” It is our privilege to help Jason and all those who have benefited from the Prison Project’s ability to support and extend the healing transformation that *A Course in Miracles* materials and **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine have brought to their lives.

I would like to send a “Blessing of Love” to all of you at Miracle Distribution Center for all the work you do to spread the word of *A Course in Miracles*. The Course has played a major part in transitioning my life from the Ego-driven mind to the Divine-self, helping me to grow toward peace in my life.

I really enjoy the CDs (by Beverly and Steven Halpern) you sent me. They are relaxing and slow my daily thoughts down. I’ve found myself feeling grounded in the present moment and “resting in God,” as the guided meditation on the CD *The Holy Instant* affirms.

I gave the *Looking Within* CD to a friend here who has been struggling with low self-esteem. He listened to it and came back to me the next day and said it was very uplifting and relaxing. He stated that it helped him to be connected to God Himself, and feel the love within himself.

I just wanted to let you know how much you all do means to me and I am sure to many others.

With God’s Blessing, Jason



We are honored to be able to meet Jason’s requests and each request that is sent to us because of your generous support of the Prison Project. If you are aware of an inmate who would like to receive books related to the Course or **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine, let us know. Because of strict rules for sending items into prisons and secured facilities, please check with the particular institution before you request 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 www.miraclecenter.org

unconscious dynamic that rotates within each of our psyches each and every day. All our past experiences and relationships have formed our belief system, what we hold to be real and true. It is from our own unique belief systems that we look out onto the world and interpret what we see. What we are seeing, however, is not necessarily what is really there.

How we actually see the world is filtered through a lens that projects our own beliefs onto a screen of life of sorts, and what we are seeing is what we think is valid and true. So what we “see” in the world outside of ourselves is actually only our perception, not necessarily a fact. This is why two or more people can see the exact same thing, but each experiences it in a slightly different way. What we perceive in turn reinforces our own belief system and so the cycle goes on and on.

What changes this cycle is the courage to be willing to challenge our own belief system. This is a powerful way to be more successful in the interpersonal dynamics of love and relationships that challenge us in just about all parts of our lives.

Love comes from respecting the fact that each and every individual – whether family, friend or foe – has his or her own, unique belief system, one that person thinks is real and true. It takes stepping outside our own comfort zone so we can see someone else’s to create a path to being able to love one another, even if we disagree or remain very different from each other.

Personal Perspective

Diane and I have been together nearly 40 years now, working and writing and traveling in over 60 countries on six continents. Being together 95 percent of the time has brought

its challenges and rewards. Needless to say, we have been stretched in myriad ways, requiring that we adapt and compromise, forgive ourselves and each other and, ultimately, grow beyond the littleness of our own ego selves. In choosing to do that, we have been able to give and receive love in the most unexpected and exquisite ways. We have embraced so very many cultures and customs that were originally foreign to the experiences that have made up our own individual belief systems. We have been embraced in return with acceptance and love.

When we were thinking about getting married decades ago, we devoted a lot of thought and contemplation to understanding the purpose of our relationship and what our love could be. We decided not only that the depth of love we had for one another could be shared between us, but that each of us could be like a screen of sorts, where our love from one to the other would filter through us and out to all others.

Our purpose was to become messengers of love everywhere we went. From that moment on, we resolved, the purpose of our lives, individually and as a couple, was to be helpful to others. Regardless of age or circumstance, we strove to help others identify, understand,

and let go of the fears that hid or obstructed the love they wanted to express and experience. In order to provide that help, we decided, we would need to see everyone as our brother and sister, and have the intention to love people unconditionally. This was no easy task, and while we failed at times, we more often than not were able to experience that unconditional love for and between ourselves and to give it away.

It is noteworthy that when the purpose for our love became clear, that insight opened the door further to a spiritual life wherein our mind, body and spirit connection blossomed. We began to see our relationship with each other and with others in a whole new way. We chose to not see anyone as an enemy.

Certainly, there is enough love in the world to go around if our hearts are open to sharing it.



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“Our purpose was to become messengers of love everywhere we went. From that moment on, we resolved, the purpose of our lives, individually and as a couple, was to be helpful to others.”

We invite you to become a Holy Helper



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For over 40 years, **Miracle Distribution Center** has been an oasis of support and guidance for students of *A Course in Miracles*.

Our life-affirming outreach, however, would not be possible without our **Holy Helpers**, our core group of donors whose support provides the Center with a constant



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If you have any questions please contact us at: **1-800-359-ACIM (2246) or www.miraclecenter.org**

to our homes. Shortly after that we began forwarding calls to our homes, which made the transition complete.

The publication schedule of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** was able to continue uninterrupted. Our graphic designer worked with us remotely, and our printing and mailer service providers were classified as essential businesses, so they remained open and ready to serve us. By the end of March we were able to perform nearly all of our regular tasks away from our physical location.

Several years ago we had begun live streaming our weekly study group meetings. This technology was already in place, and it provided for a seamless experience for our viewers. The only difference was that our studio audience was reduced to only our staff members. We operated under a state exemption that allowed for the production of "broadcasts and podcasts" as long as they took place without the public in attendance.

Our desire was that our services would continue without interruption, and we feel we succeeded!

Now what?

Since the Center is located in Southern California, we will be following Governor Newsom's guidelines on reopening. We don't quite know how that will look, as things are in flux, so if you have any questions, you can contact us.

Stay connected by email or phone

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being the beacon of God's Love that you are." — Barbara in Vermont

As always, the Center's purpose is to be truly helpful to students of *A Course in Miracles*. With that in mind, we respond quickly to all emails and are the only Course-based organization with a staff member ready to serve you by phone five days a week (**Mon-Fri**) from **9am to 4 pm (Pacific Time)**. Other times, you can also leave a message that will be answered.

We're ready to take your online orders

Our online store is ready and able to ship your items to you within 24 hours of

order placement. In many cases, the large online retailers have prioritized shipments of "essential" items, which have not included books. We are dedicated only to *A Course in Miracles*, so our items and your orders are our top priority. We appreciate your ordering materials from the Center as all proceeds from your orders support our many free services: **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine, Weekly Livestream meetings, Prayer Ministry, Prison Project, etc.

Weekly inspiration by email

We encourage you to sign up for our weekly emails which allow you to receive the most current updates on the Center and happenings, and our popular weekly Course-based articles to inspire your day. As Greg in Washington recently wrote...

"I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate and enjoy your weekly emails and other materials. I love Beverly's articles and her clarity and ability to distill complex concepts down to their simple essence. For 'over-complexifiers' like me, this is a truly invaluable service."

At the bottom of any page on our website, you may "Join Our Email List" to receive these weekly emails. Go to www.miraclecenter.org

Free weekly ACIM Livestream meetings

For over forty years, the Center has been providing a life-line for integration of the Course's profound teaching into practical understanding that allows students to apply it to their daily lives. The most insightful truth does not help us, if we do not know how it applies to our lives. Our founder, Beverly, has a knack for making the Course practical, which, especially now, is so needed.

"Wow... I'm having trouble finding the words to express gratitude for the powerful truths Beverly taught at the meeting during this tremendous time of global change. So many pearls... shared in simple ways to understand and apply today, and to embrace what's going on right now." — Rae Karen in Florida

"Thank you so much for Beverly's livestream meeting. I am in Washington State,

and, as you know, we have a pandemic going on. It is a pretty strange, uncertain time, and I write today to simply say thank you for reaching out in last night's livestream and inviting us to keep in touch. Thank you for extending a hand of love and service and for demonstrating the spiritual skills that are so necessary at this time. I have really enjoyed the Lessons in Light series. Beverly's teachings always remind me that the Love of God blesses and surrounds us all."

— Russell in Washington

Our livestream meetings are **free** every **Wednesday starting at 7:05pm (Pacific Time)**. Links to the meetings are given in our weekly emailing and also on our website.

Viewers may also subscribe to our weekly meetings (for \$5 a meeting) to watch on-demand and have access to over 250 archived meetings.

Whichever way you decide to connect with us during this pandemic, we hope you will reach out and let us be of service. We are here to be truly helpful to you.

"Thank you for all you are doing to keep the Center alive. It is a true blessing to me and so many, many others." — Pam in Georgia

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Make this Moment...

Continued from page 7

from love, and I can decide to do so at any moment.

17. This day marks the beginning of seeing the essence of love in every aspect of life and responding accordingly.

18. Live this day in a way that lets you find the secret spots of tenderness within yourself, where everything in the world becomes beautiful.

19. This day is devoted to living a life, from this point on, where you find love in the present moment no matter where you are. You can discover love in the shade of loss and the light of newness, in the dream that came true or never happened, in the pure joy of sharing a smile and in the space between tears, in your next words spoken and, at some point, in your last breath taken.

20. Let this day start a life where all occurrences are but steppingstones to the Divine. Whatever life offers, find the love poem speaking of the secret places your heart knows as home.

21. This day is for listening to the whisper of love. Love can and will

"This day is for listening to the whisper of love. Love can and will speak to you if you listen, find you when you hide, lift you in your darkest moments."



speak to you if you listen, find you when you hide, lift you in your darkest moments.

22. This day know what the poet knows: that real love does not come from a script or plan; Love unfolds on the pages of life, raw and real, messy, sometimes elusive, but always there if we are vulnerable enough to see and welcome it.

23. May this day bring awareness of the vastness of love within your heart, where all kindness resides, where every tender thought has blossomed to be given and received in the inhale and exhale of this beautiful moment.

24. Contemplate these five aspects of living love:

The only cure for pain and fear is to love fully.

The only way to love fully is to forgive completely.

The only way to forgive completely is to be present in this moment.

The only way to be present in this moment is to accept it as it is. The only way to accept the moment is to see that it is here to teach you to love deeply.❖

Remember...

When you buy your Course-related materials from the Center, you help support its many free services.

1-800-359-ACIM (2246)
or **www.miraclecenter.org**



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Receive Income for Life... and support the Center's free services

The Center's charitable gift annuity is an ideal way to give and to receive. With your charitable donation of \$10,000 or more you will receive a high, fixed rate of return for the rest of your life. Your contribution helps to fund our many free services, and best of all, payments to you are unaffected by economic downturns.

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is eligible for certain tax benefits and a portion of your annuity payments may be tax-free. In addition, you will receive a lifetime subscription to THE HOLY ENCOUNTER.

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60	3.9%
70	4.7%
80	6.5%
90+	8.6%

Our gift annuities give us the funding needed to continue our

outreach on behalf of A Course in Miracles. Please consider becoming a part of our Legacy Community.

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or email to: info@miraclecenter.org

because of all the opinions and judgments we carry around.

As I have matured and grown with the Course, I have found less value in my opinions and my need to share them. The other day, I found myself in a situation where I could have “enlightened” quite a few people with my “opinions,” but for some reason, I didn’t open my mouth. And, you know what? The world didn’t fall apart, “right” didn’t perish, and I was able to offer silent grace to those who were speaking, and I felt lighter.

Maybe that’s why the Course tells us that a quiet mind is not a little gift and that peace comes quietly into the mind that stops an instant and is still. We diminish the power of stillness and quiet, and we might even dismiss it as a nice thought but perhaps not practical in this world with all its pressing issues. Yet we’ve been told this idea for a long time in the old saying, “When your mouth is open, your ears are closed.” That is literally and metaphorically true. When we still our participation in the world for just a moment, we can actually experience what is really occurring.

“If you will lay aside the ego’s voice, however loudly it may seem to call; if you will not accept its petty gifts that give you nothing that you really want; if you will listen with an open mind, that has not told you what salvation is; then you will hear the mighty Voice of truth, quiet in power, strong in stillness, and completely certain in Its messages.” (W-106.1)

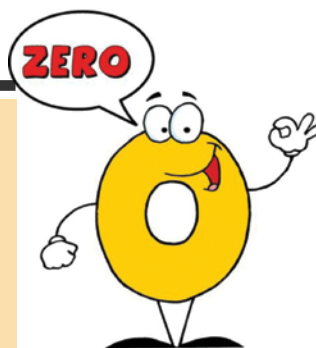
This powerful Workbook lesson (106), “Let me be still and listen to the truth,” offers us a way to experience the strength and wisdom we seek. As we withdraw allegiance to the ego’s petty judgments, we find our true power. We were lost, but now we are found, as the old spiritual “Amazing Grace” reminds us.

This does not mean, however, that we become impotent or docile in the world and our lives. It means that we actually become productive. The Course reminds us that when we don’t think with God, we are actually doing nothing. The ego has talked us into believing that all our *nothingness* is actually

doing something. But, no matter how busy you think you are with all your hateful, judgmental, and unworthy thoughts, they are still nothing.

When our son, Jeffrey, was learning his multiplication tables, he never had trouble multiplying two numbers together. For example, he understood how $2 \times 2 = 4$ or $2 \times 3 = 6$ because two sets of two

“...we would have fun coming up with fantastically large numbers and then multiplying them zero times to come up with zero!”



are four or two sets of three equal six. But when he multiplied a number with a zero, it seemed to stump him. He just couldn’t understand how the answer would be zero. So, to drive the point home, we would have fun coming up with fantastically large numbers and then multiplying them zero times to come up with zero! We would always laugh about how huge a number could be and how it could be disintegrated by a zero!

The same is true for our illusions. No matter how huge or seemingly valid the fearful problem or worry may be, the presence of God – the presence of love in our minds – shows us fear and worry’s nothingness. As we see their nothingness to rob us of our peace, the Holy Spirit gently translates the nothingness into a call for love. As we make this shift, we are led by the Holy Spirit as to how we can apply that ointment in the most healing way.

This is a process. We are bound to rush to judgment or project our opinions, but they don’t need to find “fertile ground” in our minds any more. As the Course says,

“Tolerance for pain may be high, but it is not without limit. Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there *must* be a better way. As this recognition becomes more firmly established, it becomes a turning point. This ultimately reawakens spiritual vision, simultaneously

weakening the investment in physical sight. The alternating investment in the two levels of perception is usually experienced as conflict, which can become very acute. But the outcome is as certain as God.” (T-2.III.3:5)

It’s interesting that the Course tells us this process of awakening can be experienced as conflict in our minds, and isn’t that true?! Many people have shared with me how they just love the Course and experience such wonderful, peaceful awareness and then everything stops! They become frustrated and stymied. But, if perceived correctly, this can be seen as great movement and healing. We are detaching from the physical sight and seeming reality of this world and embracing a spiritual vision. This path is new to us, and it may be challenging at times, but we need to keep reassuring ourselves “the outcome is as certain as God.”



“When babies are born, their whole world in the womb is destroyed. They die to the only life experience they have.”

It is similar to birth. When babies are born, their whole world in the womb is destroyed. They die to the only life experience they have.

To the rest of us, however, that “death and destruction” is worth it, since now they truly are born to experience life in this world with us. They have to detach from one existence – the only one *they* know – to experience what we see as them fully living their lives. In our minds, their temporary “pain” would be well worth the final outcome. We even slap ‘em on the rear to welcome them “home!”

The point is, it is impossible to determine what is best for us or for anyone. What we can gather is that peace must be our goal and love needs to lead the way, if we are to truly live. Any other approach is just a poor substitute of what we are entitled to and not worthy of a child of God.

Let’s get there together! We all need help to awaken; help from the Holy Spirit and from

each other. The Course reminds us that the “ark of peace is entered two by two” and that “salvation is a collaborative venture.”

Our relationships keep us accountable and help us to awaken faster. It’s sometimes so easy to be in a peaceful state until we open the door and walk outside and deal with those people! Those people help us to look at ourselves and decide that peace is more important than our judgments. Many times I find that I make more of an effort to be vigilant for God because of our son, Jeffrey. I realized that as he was growing up he was watching me, and I wanted to be the example I spoke about. Much like the basis of the anonymous programs, joining together gives us support, accountability, and a purpose to keep in mind.

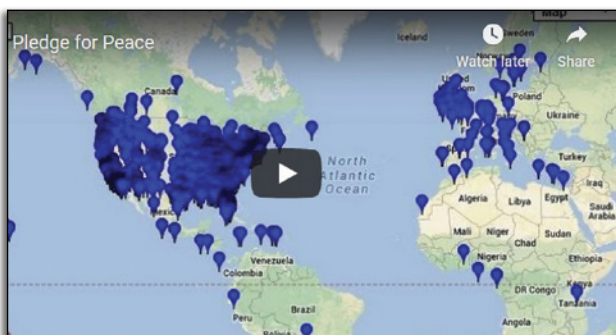
Years ago, when texting was in its infancy, Oprah Winfrey started a movement online to have people take a pledge to not text while driving. Over a million people took that pledge. No one was watching them but themselves. By taking the pledge they were committing to themselves and the anonymous others who took the pledge to not text while driving. They were joining, in a way, to be truly helpful.

What if we decided to take a pledge to be truly helpful – to take a pledge to remember our purpose? So that is what I started back in 2010. We created our “Pledge for Peace” on our site. If you go to

our website at: www.miraclecenter.org and click on “Take the Pledge for Peace,” you can join me and countless others around the world in remembering that the peace of God is our one goal. We will also track your pledge on our world map so you can see everyone who is joining with you in this goal.

Take the pledge with us to make peace your goal today. We can bring the peace we are seeking into reality, if we truly want it. A Course in Miracles gives us this pledge:

“The peace of God is my one goal; the aim of all my living here, the end I seek, my purpose and my function and my life, while I abide where I am not at home.” (W-205)



“Take the pledge with us today. Let’s be in unity with each other and accountable to remember that we can and will make a difference today.”

Every great spiritual teaching tells us this world is not our final destination, but while we are here let’s bring heaven to this world, to our lives, to our jobs, to our finances, to our relationships.

Take the pledge with us today. Let’s be in unity with each other and accountable to remember that we can and will make a

difference together.

It’s not easy, we’ll want to fall back into our old patterns, but if you can remember that you took a pledge for peace, maybe you can choose again. As the saying goes, “Success means getting up just one more time than you fall down.”

Take the pledge to make peace your goal today and allow your healing and the world’s to begin. Now, that’s an “opinion” that heals!

His Truth is Marching On

Continued from page 5

national spotlight once again on our country’s original sin. Social and civil reform is needed for our country to return to the upward path toward wholeness. But, let’s go even further. The shackles of slavery still live on in our collective hearts and minds. In this national moment of our collective voice calling forth



“In this national moment of our collective voice calling forth to weed out systemic racism, let us not only be catalysts for social change, but organic, spiritual change, as well.”

to weed out systemic racism, let us not only be catalysts for social change, but organic, spiritual change, as well.

A Course in Miracles offers us this potential. As we follow this peaceful path that gently leads us to unity, peace, and to our true home of love, we must take personal responsibility to enter this journey. But we are not alone in this, as Holy Spirit is always by our side supporting us. And collectively, as the Son of God, we will practice holding each of our brothers and sisters in the light of truth. Join me in singing that great abolitionist refrain... “Glory, glory, Hallelujah! His truth is marching on.”

Join Us in Taking the

Pledge for Peace

Form is available online at:
www.miraclecenter.org
“Services”, “Pledge for Peace”

- ☐ I pledge to make the Peace of god my one goal!
- ☐ I join with others around the world in not just talking about peace but making a conscious choice for peace in every moment of my day.
- ☐ I am willing to let two or more people know about my pledge and invite them to join me.
- ☐ Please chart my pledge on the “Pledge for Peace” map online at www.miraclecenter.org

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Use the enclosed envelope and mail to: MDC, 3947 E. La Palma, Anaheim, CA 92807

The HOLY ENCOUNTER

JULY / AUGUST 2020

In This Issue...

- An Opinion That Heals
 - Miracles in the Time of Covid
 - His Truth Is Marching On
 - All You Need Is Love
 - Make This Moment Beautiful
 - A Change Is Gonna Come
- And so much more!*



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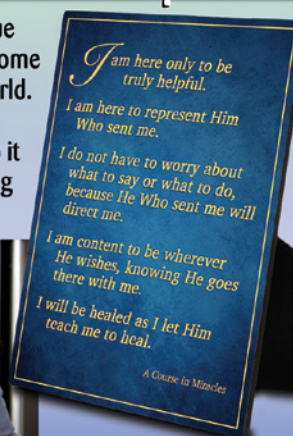
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ACIM Prayer Plaque

This beautiful 5x7 navy blue, wooden plaque with the words of a Course prayer has become a mantra for ACIM students around the world. It reminds you of your true purpose in life, and the prayer takes 20 seconds to say, so it is the perfect prayer to affirm while washing your hands! Get one for every sink!

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