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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2025

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

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



“Beatitudes” from A Course in Miracles

by Beverly McNeff

The beatitudes, as Jesus stated them in the Bible, were considered a promise of hope for the people of the time. The term “beati” translates to “happy,” “rich,” or “blessed.” As he stood and delivered what came to be known as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus was not speaking to the rich and powerful but to the poor and disenfranchised who hungered for a message of release and healing from their oppression. His message was not a focus on the outer world for salvation, but a focus on the inner truth that would release their minds and hearts.

There is debate over how many beatitudes Jesus offered since the gospels of Mathew and Luke differ. But, generally, there are considered to be eight simple statements that give hope, such as: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled; Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy; Blessed are

the pure in heart, for they will see God; Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

In our lives today, we often hunger for that same hope and healing. Our world is filled with injustice, attack, violence, sickness, and pain; these are the same concerns the followers of Jesus had. And yet to his followers, then and now, Jesus is saying the same thing: we are blessed. Not



“... to his followers, then and now, Jesus is saying the same thing: we are blessed. Not because we may feel we are suffering, but because His Help has never left our side.”

because we may feel we are suffering, but because His Help has never left our side. This awareness is our way out of suffering. We need to recognize that we are blessed and be glad, for we are not alone and have a mighty purpose to fulfill.

A Course in Miracles is a powerful how-to path for us to awaken to the Help that is ever available

and follow its prescription for our healing. As I reviewed the Course’s Workbook lesson 123, “I thank my Father for His gifts to me,” I realized it actually encompasses A Course in Miracles’ very own beatitudes.

Continued on page 3

A Calendar of Healing

The transformative power of A Course in Miracles comes alive in the Center’s annual wall calendar! Since 2007, we have printed these full-color, 12” x 24” wall calendars, which feature 12 large photos of unique scenery from around the world with a different, inspiring Course quote for each image. The calendar grid features a spacious square for each day, which includes the numbered day of the year so you can follow your Course lessons from the workbook.

In today’s digital age, with cyber calendars on your phone or computer, we at the Center still believe

that a tangible wall calendar with a powerful quote by your side for an entire month is essential.

We also print these calendars for our Prison Project, as they are frequently requested by prisoners who are anxious to have the Course by their side.

Order your copy today and consider adding some for loved ones’ birthdays, holiday giving, or anytime you want to give a meaningful gift. Quantity discounts are available. And, of course, all purchases go to help support the services of the Center!

See back cover for details.



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

For more Information go to
miraclecenter.org or call **714-632-9005**

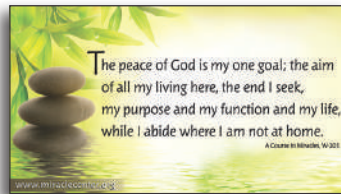
● **Double Your Giving!** – You can often double your gift to MDC by contacting your employer to learn about its matching gift program. Two donors who work for Costco in California recently did this. In most cases, all you need to do is complete a simple form that your employer will provide you and enclose it with your contribution to us. Your gift then doubles its value to our Center. For more information, visit "Our Legacy Community" under the "About" tab on our website's menu bar or give us a call.



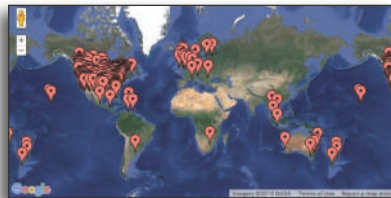
● **Miracle Milestones (MM)** – Celebrate your loved ones or yourself with a gift to the Center! Many have chosen to celebrate MMs with a donation. Whether it's a birthday, anniversary, or a way to remember a loved one, making a gift to the Center (and inviting others to do the same) is a way to keep the love and joy flowing. As **Sandy Bartorillo** in Washington donated \$120.00, "In honor of **Jeffrey's graduation** and in gratitude for MDC and all of you!" We appreciate the many who celebrate with us and will acknowledge your MM in **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER!**



● **Take the Peace Pledge!** The Course tells us that if we forget our goal and purpose, we will be confused, unsure of what we are, and conflicted in our actions. Having a consistent goal in mind and heart is critical to our healing and for the healing of our world. Join us in making peace your goal by taking the **Pledge for Peace** today. By making a commitment with others around the world to make the peace of God your one goal today, you will become part of the unity of thought that is needed to unlock our power and healing. Take the **Pledge for Peace** at the Center's website, add your placemark on our world map, and then share the pledge with friends and family. Together, we can transform this world in peace. As the song says, "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me." It all starts with you. Join us today. Receive your free card by pledging with the Center.

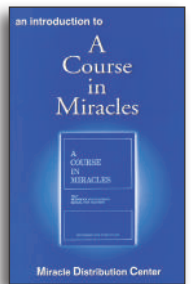


● **Oh, how things have changed** – We began keeping track of *A Course in Miracles* study groups in 1980 with a handful of people partici-



pating. From there, it grew to over 2,000 in-person meetings worldwide. Several years ago, Course publisher Judith Skutch Whitson asked if we would begin keeping track of online study groups. We began with very few, but since the pandemic, the number of virtual groups has grown to over 350. You can search for both online and in-person groups on our website under the "Services" tab.

● **ACIM Free Overview** – Would you like a brief, written overview of *A Course in Miracles* to help introduce it to a friend? Or perhaps an e-book that's also available as a two-hour audio introduction? We offer free versions of all of them. Go to our website and click "About," then "About *A Course in Miracles*," and help spread the word!



● **"I could see peace instead of this."** (W-34) The promise of peace to prevail and transcend the limitations of the world is inevitable, for, in truth, only peace is possible because that is the Will of God. It's time we join with our real power instead of our diminished thinking. Join with us daily at **4:30 pm (Pacific Time)** as we unite with you, your loved ones, and those in the Miracle Prayer Ministry. The gift you give is the gift you will receive! If you have a request, please send it to MDC. Thoughts for:

September: "Only God's plan for salvation will work." (W-71)

October: "I am one Self, united with my Creator." (W-95)

November: "I share God's Will for happiness for me." (W-102)

Our 2025 Bookmark is Available!

Thoughts in the Miracle Prayer Ministry 2025

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: God goes with me wherever I go. (41)
February: Love is the way I walk in gratitude. (195)
March: Into His Presence would I enter now. (157)
April: I could see peace instead of this. (34)
May: I am the light of the world. (61)
June: Forgiveness is my function as the light of the world. (62)

July: The light has come. (73)
August: Forgiveness offers everything I want. (122)
September: Only God's plan for salvation will work. (71)
October: I am one Self, united with my Creator. (95)
November: I share God's Will for happiness for me. (102)
December: God goes with me wherever I go. (41)

Request your full-color bookmark today which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2025.

Go to: **miraclecenter.org**

Here is how this lesson's eight "beatitudes" are stated, with additional commentary to allow you to feel their power and help in your life right now.

"Beatitudes" from A Course in Miracles

1. **"Be glad today, [...] your Father has not left you to yourself [...] He has not abandoned you [...] nor let you wander in the dark alone."**

We have not been left to our own demise. We are not lost forever in our distorted thinking, for God has never left our side, no matter how lost we may feel or how fearful the world may seem. Acknowledging His Presence can not only transform our lives but also give us the power to face any obstacle the world may present.

"If you knew Who walks beside you on the way that you have chosen, fear would be impossible." (T-18.III.3)

2. **"Be [glad] He has saved you from the self you thought you made to take the place of Him and His creation."**

He has saved us from our unworthy thoughts, for no illusion of the world can change the truth of Who we are. No matter how many times we have doubted or denied God's presence in our lives, or how harsh we have been to others and ourselves. God continues to call to us imploringly to turn to Him.

"You are altogether irreplaceable in the Mind of God. No one else can fill your part in it, and while you leave your part of it empty your eternal place merely waits for your return."

(T-9.VIII.10)

3. **"[Be glad] His Love forever will remain**

shining on you, forever without change."

As we are told in the Course, love is all-encompassing. In reality, there can be no opposite to what is all, but the impossible has been inserted into our thinking, and fear appears to be love's opposite. Fear (thoughts of anger, attack, judgment, depression, etc.) can have no power in truth. In the mind that has lost its way, His Love still remains. Even when we feel alone, this eternal flame of love can never be extinguished.

"Nothing you can do can change Eternal Love."

(Manual.C-5.6)

4. **"[Be glad] that you are changeless, for the Son He loves is changeless as Himself."**

Love will remain our essence even when we wander into fear because what is changeless

(our eternal Self) cannot be mocked.

This awareness has nothing to do with our bodies or our actions in these bodies, and thank God for that! We are not asked to attack ourselves for the mistaken actions we have taken in this world, but to look at those actions with the Guide God has given us in the Holy Spirit, so that those pains can be healed. His Voice will help us to look with forgiving eyes so we might focus on the solution to our illusions and not reinforce them.

"Learn, then, the happy habit of response to all temptation to perceive yourself as weak and miserable with these words: I am as God created me. His Son can suffer nothing. And I am His Son." (T-31.VIII.5)



"Acknowledging His Presence can not only transform our lives but also give us the power to face any obstacle the world may present."



"If every encounter with another is a holy encounter, this gives us an opportunity to find salvation now. Will we be guided to take some action in this world?"

5. **"Be [glad] you are saved."**

We are saved, and that is something for which we should be glad. It is not sometime in the future that we will find this awareness, but in every holy encounter with another.

"When you meet anyone, remember it is a holy encounter. As you see him you will see yourself. As you treat him you will treat yourself. As you think of him you will think of yourself. Never forget this, for in him you will find yourself or lose yourself." (T-8.III.4)

6. **"Be glad you have a function in salvation to fulfill."**

If every encounter with another is a holy encounter (which can occur in person or in thought), this gives us an opportunity to find salvation now. Will we be guided to take some action in this world? Perhaps, because in lesson 71, "Only God's plan for salvation will work," we are "asking God to reveal His plan to us" when we affirm:

*"What would You have me do?
Where would You have me go?
What would You have me say,
and to whom?"*

We are asked to give Him full charge of our practice so we might fulfill His plan for salvation, whether that means we do "something" in the world or are

asked to hold the truth for a Child of God. Both expressions are equal in power to heal.

While we are a vessel for His Will, let us remember we have a great purpose every day: To arise in glory every morning because we do have a function to fulfill here and now!

"I will arise in glory, and allow the light in me to shine upon

the world throughout the day." (W-237.1)

7. **"Be [glad] that your value far tran-**

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Miracle Musings ...

A Transcendental Place of Heavenly Vibrations

by Paul McNeff

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

"There is a place in you where this whole world has been forgotten; where no memory of sin and of illusion lingers still. There is a place in you which time has left, and echoes of eternity are heard. There is a resting place so still no sound except a hymn to Heaven rises up to gladden God the Father and the Son. Where Both abide are They remembered, Both. And where They are is Heaven and is peace." (T-29.V.1)

When I was a senior in high school, I had a good friend named Jim

Mahood. Jim was also a senior, and he was the kind of guy everyone loved having around — the class clown in the best sense. He had an incredible gift for making people laugh, often until we were in tears. Whether it was a group of five or fifty, Jim would put on a spontaneous show that left us all gasping for air between fits of laughter.

But near the end of our senior year, everything changed in an instant.

One afternoon, Jim got word that his dad had been in a car accident not far from their home. He didn't know how serious it was, but without hesitation, he jumped into his car and drove straight to the scene. For reasons we never fully understood, Jim had to park across a busy four-lane road from where the accident had occurred. As he got out of his car and began crossing the street to reach his dad, he was struck by another car and killed instantly.

The news shattered our school and the entire community. It was the kind of tragedy that doesn't just break hearts, it leaves a lasting silence where laughter once was. Jim, the one who had always lifted our spirits, was suddenly gone.



"Knowing of my love for choral music and my involvement in a small chamber choir at my church, Jim's family asked if our group would sing at his memorial service."

To make the heart-break even deeper, Jim had left behind Diana, his pregnant girlfriend, who was only a junior. What was already an unthinkable loss became something even more profound — the loss of

a friend, a son, a partner, and a father who would never have the chance to meet his child.

Tragedies like this one remind us of the deep interconnectedness of community. In the days following Jim's death, we found ourselves drawn together, often gathering at Diana's home. There, we laughed, cried, and shared story after story, little moments that painted the full picture of Jim's vibrant life. His presence still lingered in our memories, and in those moments of togetherness, it felt like he was with us, too.

Knowing of my love for choral music and my involvement in a small chamber choir at my church, Jim's family asked if our group would sing at his memorial service. I was deeply honored by the request. I reached out to my fellow singers right away, and without hesitation, they agreed to take part.

We had just learned a beautiful piece by Ralph Carmichael called *A Quiet Place* — divine providence, perhaps — and I knew immediately it was the right song for this moment. While I can't share the music and harmony here, I can share the poignant words that captured the stillness, sorrow, and hope we all felt that day.

There is a quiet place
Far from the rapid pace
Where God can soothe my troubled mind
Sheltered by tree and flow'r
There in my quiet hour with Him
My cares are left behind
Whether a garden small
Or on a mountain tall
New strength and courage there I find
Then from this quiet place
I go prepared to face
A new day with love for all mankind

We gathered for a special rehearsal, determined to bring our best efforts forward — hoping to offer comfort and healing, as only music can. The response to the song was immediate and deeply moving. Even as we sang, tears streamed down the faces of those in the audience. As singers, we had to gently detach from the emotion of the moment in order to keep our wits and carry the song through to its end.

Afterward, the family spoke with us. They told us how deeply touched they were by the music and how profoundly

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

healing it had been for them.

Having been a musician all my life, I have often experienced what I can only describe as *heaven on earth* — especially



“One of his most iconic songs, ‘Good Vibrations,’ contrasts the concrete and sensory – sight, taste, scent, and color – with something more intangible and mysterious: vibrations.”

in those moments when time seems to stand still, and I feel completely at one with the universe during a performance.

To me, heaven is not some far-off mystery. It is the alignment of frequency and vibration — a harmony of energies — and the surrender to the journey those vibrations invite us to take.

We were honored that the gift of music we offered that day was so well received in the hearts of our grieving friends and family of my dear friend, Jim Mahood.

In Workbook lesson 47, “God is the strength in which I trust,” *A Course in Miracles* speaks eloquently of a heavenly place within us that can overcome any worldly trouble.

“In the latter phase of the practice period, try to reach down into your mind to a place of real safety. You will recognize that you have reached it if you feel a sense of deep peace, however briefly. Let go all the trivial things that churn and bubble on the surface of your mind, and reach down and below them to the Kingdom of Heaven. There is a place in you where there is perfect peace. There is a place in you where nothing is impossible. There is a place in you where the strength of God abides.” (W-47.7)

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A Gift of Peace for our Planet

A message from Beverly McNeill



9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in NYC



9/11 Memorial of light in NYC

The Dalai Lama was once asked why he didn't fight back against the Chinese when he was exiled from Tibet. He replied with his usual humor, “Because war is obsolete, you know.” Then he paused and, in a more serious tone, said that the mind can always rationalize fighting back, but the heart will never understand it. We would

then be divided within ourselves (the heart and the mind), and the war would be inside us.

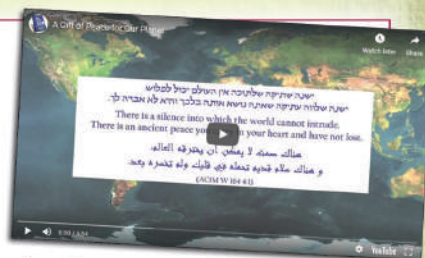
No matter which side you find yourself on regarding the issues that face us in world conflicts or what may be occurring in your own personal “wars,” it is now time for us to rise to the level of the answer and not stay in the conflict. *A Course in Miracles* wisely suggests that we rise above the battleground for a little while each day as we practice our daily lessons or simply remember the presence of God (love). From that perspective, a miracle can be born, and that miracle can heal what seems insurmountable, for nothing is impossible in the face of love.

Every year, in honor of the anniversary of 9/11, we offer a video for peace. May we focus on the healing unity of love within us, rather than any areas of disagreement. We pray for this for our interpersonal relationships and our planet, for in the healing of one lies the healing of the other.

“This is beautiful. It should be aired during the last 5 minutes of every nightly world news broadcast.”

This video is the brainchild of my dear friend and sound healing pioneer, Steven Halpern. Since 1983, our friendship and collaboration have resulted in a series of seven recordings that blend the timeless message of *A Course in Miracles* with his healing music. We have joined together to create this video as a gift of healing for our planet.

With Steven's inspired music for healing in the Middle East and the peace-filled words of the Course spoken in English, Hebrew, and Arabic, we hope to allow peace to rise to the forefront of our consciousness for all on our planet. I encourage you to share this video freely and let us know your thoughts.



The video may be viewed at: miraclecenter.org/wp/peace-video/



Recognizing Spirit

The Art of Allowing

by Lee Jampolsky, Ph.D.

"It is a journey without distance to a goal that has never changed. Truth can only be experienced. It cannot be described and it cannot be explained. I can make you aware of the conditions of truth, but the experience is of God. Together we can meet its conditions, but truth will dawn upon you of itself." (T-8.VI.9)

There is a river of Love within us, a quiet stream of Life awaiting our return — not one we navigate with map, oar, or sweat, but uncharted, eternal waters where miracles live and the deeper Truth begins to dawn: that we belong, that we are already held. It asks for no conquest, no sacrifice — only a conscious allowing, a quiet listening, a gentle exhale, a soft and wordless yes to what is already here, already whole.

The world tells us to achieve — to chase what we think we want. Whether we've mastered the art of making things happen or faltered beneath the weight of unmet ambition, we often find ourselves in the same hollow place: dismayed not only by our failures or successes, but by the emptiness left behind when all the striving proves barren, and joy remains elusive.

At first, we struggle to trust the stillness that calls us back to these hallowed waters. The ego is a laborer — a tireless smith at the forge, hammering steel in the hot din, each strike's clamor drowning out the invitation of stillness. It believes all joy must be earned through toil — a distant promise wrestled into form, only to become a hollow, compulsive pursuit.

All of it is born of this: a desperate choreography to uphold the one impossibility it dares not question — that we are somehow separate from our Source.

But there is a truth, longing to be felt — like the turning of a tide, when outgoing and incoming waters briefly meet and become one. In that still convergence, the deepest aliveness, the softest brush of the eternal, arrives not through force but through an allowing filled with trust, welcome, and acceptance — a slow and widening surrender, a release into Love from the pull of the ego's orbit, where we no longer need to be elsewhere, or more, or less, or other than we are.



"There is a river of Love within us, a quiet stream of Life awaiting our return – not one we navigate with map, oar, or sweat, but uncharted, eternal waters where miracles live"

What would it mean for us to live like this?
To drop the polished stones of ambition —
and the long-kept ledger of guilt —
into the still depths and watch them disappear.
To lay aside the constant, often unconscious shaping of
our image,
and instead kneel at the edge of what is already here —
who we are in this unadorned, ordinary moment,
the one we so easily abandon

for the mirage of fear-filled tomorrows
or the weight of yesterdays still carrying
hurt, blame and guilt,
believing they will somehow make today feel
safer, more certain, more under control.

To allow is to trust that the present is not empty,
but touched by Love still gathering its voice,
waiting to be welcomed —
a silence alive with unseen beginnings.
It abounds with the unnoticed,
the birthplace of awe,
where the earliest stirrings of becoming
lean gently toward our receptive awareness,
hoping to be seen.

Joy is not summoned; it arrives unannounced
— like light slanting across the floor that no
one asked to be beautiful, but is. Even restlessness
and doubt — those old wanderers — can

become openings, if we soften rather than flee. The smallest
flickers of unease, the urge to distract, the familiar pull away
from the stillness we crave — each can become a threshold
barely perceptible, yet wide enough to lead us inward.

In softening,
Love and life meet us, fully — just as we are.

When we stop fighting, pushing, pulling, denying, and running —
when we sit, even briefly, with what unsettles us —
each moment begins to offer its lesson:
that nothing is lifeless, nothing is void of Love.
Even silence, when met with presence, begins to sing.

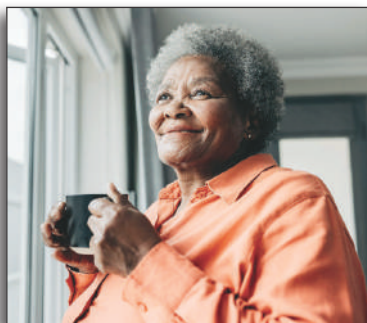
And here is the paradox: All that is beautiful in life, all that truly matters, all that carries grace, does not come when we grasp for it — not by thinking it is ours to force into being. We push against life like a river fighting its own pull, forgetting both its Source and the vast ocean it longs to join.

Our most joyful and peaceful moments come when we live from where we are, grounded in the present — not from where we think we should be, or in resentment over where we've been. Freedom arises when we step out of the self-made maze erected with fear and comparison, no longer asking the world to rearrange itself around our imagined safety, but letting Love's touch dissolve our resistance.

Allowing Love to be what it is feels like sunlight meeting closed eyes, the breath rising in effortless fullness and falling in ease, the deep letting go and rediscovery of a mind no longer grasping, and a heart no longer sheltering itself from life.

It is the Soul returning to its ancient rhythm — like riverstone worn smooth not by force but by the natural process of becoming, where nothing is rushed, and everything unfolds in its time.

This is the lesson hidden in every hour: the unforced rhythm of Love is always alive within us. Along with our cherished moments, every pause, every unknown, every challenge, every loss is teaching us to love more openly, to heal where we are rubbed raw from life's disappointments or the burden of unspoken grief, where we feel fractured by the past or carry the lingering pull of unmet longing — revealing the spaciousness of Love in the places fear once constricted.



“Our most joyful and peaceful moments come when we live from where we are, grounded in the present – not from where we think we should be ...”

To allow is to open.

And in that opening, Presence arises and Love flows —

not to give us what we sought, but to awaken what was already ours.

It is not a step forward, but a surrender from where we stand —

a conscious turning toward the heart, rather than a flight into the old patterns

and postures of the ego.

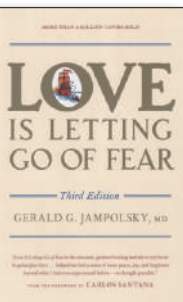
Here, even pain and fear become teachers of Love — not to remove us from this moment, but to draw us deeper into its unfolding Grace.



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.

This comment is from a supporter in Arizona. Jayne was deeply touched by the letter sent to us from a prisoner in Tennessee, and she wanted to follow up to find out what had happened. We wanted to share it with all our readers to remind everyone that no request is ever left unfulfilled.



“I read in the recent July/August issue of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER**, in the Prison Project article, that an inmate named ‘Cody’ in Scott County Jail, Tennessee, gave a wonderful testimonial about the book *Love Is Letting Go of Fear* by Gerald Jampolsky. His last sentence says, ‘Please send another book.’

Given all Cody wrote about his experience of reading *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, I am wondering if he received another book, as he requested. I thought it was so inspiring that he would ask for another book, especially since he wrote that it was the first book he was able to read all the way through. Wow! That is awesome! Thank you for honoring his request and so many others!”

– Jayne in Arizona



We absolutely were able to grant Cody's request, Jayne! And we continue to meet the needs of all the requests we receive from prisoners thanks to the loving support of you, our readers, who value and support the Center and its Prison Project. When we join together, we can and do create miracles. As a matter of fact, in conjunction with the passion of a Course student in Washington who connected us with prison libraries in the state, we were able to supply EVERY one of their libraries with *A Course in Miracles* for prisoners to check out. Again, none of this would be possible without the dedication and generous support of all of you, so we can spread miracles of love and support wherever we can!

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 and the Center, enabling us to continue exploring innovative approaches to healing our world.

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

scends your meager gifts and petty judgments of the one whom God established as His Son."

Our value is not determined by what we have or have not accomplished in the world; our value is determined by God, Who sees us all as His beloved Child in Whom He is well pleased. It is time we move past the negative self-talk that fills our minds and realize that all of us (yes, even YOU) have a mighty purpose.

"True humility requires that you accept [that you are the light of the world] because it is God's Voice which tells you it is true. This is a beginning step in accepting your real function on earth. It is a giant stride toward taking your rightful place in salvation. It is a positive assertion of your right to be saved, and an acknowledgment of the power that is given you to save others." (W-61.3)

8. *"[Be glad] that in our solitude a Friend has come to speak the saving Word of God to us."*

We are here to light this world with miracles by seeing every encounter (or attitude we hold about ourselves) as an opportunity to extend love. We are here to see only the extensions of love or the calls for love. To help us translate this truth (in thought and action) into the world, we have been given a Friend (the Voice for God). It is now time we recognize the fact that we are not alone; we have the Help we need. But, *"His word is soundless if [we do not hear it]."*

Therefore, we need to practice listening to make it dependable. We do our workbook lessons, read the text, and focus within as we become quiet and

comfortable with asking for Help in every encounter. We need to not become discouraged, but bring every fear or doubt, however great or small, to Him.

"The Holy Spirit's function is entirely communication. He therefore must remove whatever interferes with



"A Course in Miracles tells us that the 'cost' of restoration with God is for us to release our painful illusions and accept the truth of God's love for us."

let the light come streaming through. There are no hidden chambers in God's temple." (T-14.VI.8)

And finally...

Let us take these eight thoughts from lesson 123, "I thank my Father for His gifts to me," and consider them our new beatitudes. As the beatitudes were revolutionary gifts from a ground-breaking teacher, let us remember that teacher (Jesus, our elder brother) is still with us today to remind us of the Christ we all are. Injustice, insanity, and chaos have always been part of the world because it is a world that believes in sin — that we are separated from each other and God. *A Course in Miracles* tells us that the "cost" of restoration with God is for us to release our painful illusions and accept the truth of God's love for us. Salvation is with us right now, and a promise given us by God that we would find our way to Him. As we read in the Course,

"Here is the only 'sacrifice' You ask of Your beloved Son; You ask him to give up all suffering, all sense of loss and sadness, all anxiety and doubt, and freely let Your Love come streaming in to his awareness, healing him of pain, and giving him Your Own eternal joy.

Such is the 'sacrifice' You ask of me, and one I gladly make; the only 'cost' of restoration of Your memory to me, for the salvation of the world." (W-323.1)

May we together realize the gifts we have been given and the Help that is ever available. And, when we feel lost and alone, let us remember, *"Only what you have not given can be lacking in any situation."* (T-17.VII.4) Therefore, let us give by *"becom[ing] the messenger who brings [God's] Voice with [us], and lets It echo round and round the world."*

We have a mighty purpose in salvation, and we have everything we need to fulfill our healing and awakening right now. Now that is something to definitely be grateful for. ❖

*All quotes are from lesson 123 in *A Course in Miracles* unless otherwise noted

A Transcendental Place

Continued from page 5

Not long ago, the world lost a giant of pop music — Brian Wilson, founder and creative force behind the Beach Boys. One of his most iconic songs, *"Good Vibrations,"* contrasts the concrete and sensory — sight, taste, scent, and color — with something more intangible and mysterious: *vibrations*.

Wilson later explained that the inspiration for the song came from his childhood. His mother had told him about invisible forces in the air, or energies that couldn't be seen but could be felt. She explained it in a way a child could grasp: dogs bark at some people and not at others because they can sense "bad vibrations." That simple yet profound idea stuck with him.

In *Good Vibrations*, Wilson took that childhood lesson and flipped it — focusing instead on the positive vibrations that flow between people and within ourselves. He transformed an abstract concept into a musical experience that radiated joy, resonance, and healing.

In a 2005 interview with Charlie Rose on PBS, Brian Wilson expressed this conviction in a way that was both dramatic and sincere ...

BW: "I saw in the future a vision of music in a dream I had one night, I foresaw the future way, way, way farther than we are now even. I heard all kinds of celestial sounds, you know, it just blew my mind."

CR: "Yeah?"

BW: "I think, eventually we're headed for heaven, I think so."

CR: "Are you headed for heaven?"

BW: "Yeah!"

CR: "All of us have a chance?"

BW: "Yeah!"

In a world of chaos and uncertainty, we are bombarded daily by the constant churn and bubble of distractions, disinformation, and untruths. *A Course in Miracles* does not

promise that we will avoid these diversions of the ego, but

Brian Wilson of "The Beach Boys" in 2005 with talk show host Charlie Rose on PBS.



"Wilson said, 'I saw in the future a vision of music in a dream I had one night, I foresaw the future way, way, way farther than we are now even. I heard all kinds of celestial sounds, you know, it just blew my mind.'"

it does offer us a miraculous path to freedom from their grip on our peace of mind.

So what are we waiting for?

Simply still yourself. Breathe. And allow yourself to enter into the heavenly kingdom of good vibrations — the quiet, unseen harmonies that reconnect us with the truth of who we really are.

And, like those gathered to celebrate the life of my dear friend Jim Mahood, allow those vibrations to rise above the noise of life's troubles — to transcend the menial and the painful, and penetrate deeply into your soul. Let them bring you peace, offer healing, and gently transport you ... to heaven. ❖

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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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The Sequoia of Salvation

by Joseph Miller

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

(Matthew 13:31)

From small beginnings may come great things. In fact, no great thing ever came from anywhere else. Ideas rule the world, as essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, and every idea has a seed moment. I find this idea very compelling and useful. As I move through the world on any given day, my attention is naturally drawn to the fruit of previous seeds. I don't mean strawberries and apples, I'm talking about the objects, inventions, habits, practices, and commitments that occupy so much of my attention. I am enmeshed in so much furniture of the world that I simply take for granted. I tend to experience all of it as static and unyielding, or only transforming at a glacial pace. But it is transforming, and each and every aspect comes from tiny beginnings.

I think, for example, about my marriage of 37 years. There was a first moment to this long relationship. There was a first meeting and exchange of words. It was something small and by-the-way at the time, an incidental introduction amidst a lot of other preoccupations at that stage of life.

Or I think about my profession, in the window-covering trade. That began with a friend introducing me to a business owner

who was looking to train an installer. Again, at the time, it was small and incidental, just the exchange of a few words.

The Ukrainian refugee family that has shared our home for two years - that relationship is traced to a roundtable in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, that my wife and I attended in 2017. Konstantin (the boys' father, an educator) gave a short talk on his teaching methods - just one of a number of presentations that weekend. But his presence, clarity, and affability were impressive enough to be noted in my journal.



Giant Sequoia seeds

"These seeds are flying by us every day. How vigilant are we? How many genuine seeds of transformation slip by unrecognized because they are just too small?"

These seeds are flying by us every day. How vigilant are we? How many genuine seeds of transformation slip by unrecognized because they are just too small? — And besides, we have other plans! Our attitude to them should not be gratuitous. We *need* the transformations that these seeds offer,

and we recognize this as they sprout and evolve. They "have our name" on them, so to speak. They are purposeful, intent to embed in the prepared soil of our minds, our hearts, our time, space, and resources. I might as well have said "our womb." Pregnancy and birth have long been metaphors for the transformations of inner life. The Austrian poet Rilke wrote, "The future enters into us, in order to transform itself within us, long before it happens." And Jesus' likening of the Word to seed is simply part of the wisdom discourse of a time which precedes him hundreds of years, to when the Stoics coined *Logos Spermatikos*, the generative principle that orders the cosmos. "Logos" can mean Word, Reason, Idea, or Design. The Word from the Father is the beginning of a reformed life.

Early in the summer, I went to Sequoia National Park with the Ukrainian boys and their father, who live with me. We slept in tents and swam in the river. We enjoyed campfires, singing, stories, and hot cocoa. By day, we stood in wonder before Sentinel Tree, and General Sherman Tree — said to be the most massive tree on earth. I showed the boys the little egg-shaped cones from *Sequoiadendron Giganteum* scattered on the forest floor, and we pried into their crevices and shook the cones, hoping to liberate the little winged seeds inside that look like oatmeal flakes. The search for something so small was a matter of great wonder to the boys. This was no fable, but a fact: these trees towering before us, ancient in majesty and quiescence, came from these tiny seeds. Not only that, but these trees tolerate wildfires every decade or so. Fire, in fact, is crucial to the thriving of the species, stimulating the cones to release their seeds and clearing underbrush for new saplings.

I don't picture the seed as some tiny little body, a finite agent that has to exert

itself against a hostile world. To my mind, it is more accurate to regard it as a portal between realms. Vast amounts of energy and materials stand waiting to pass through what begins as only a pinpoint of light.

For me, the Kingdom of Heaven is the kingship of heaven, the higher mind holding sway over the lower, “on Earth as it is in Heaven.” It grows from small beginnings. And it is not gratuitous: when Jesus called his disciples, they responded with recognition. Something already within them stirred, quickened by his Word. The Word is the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual power of the living Voice for God. Its influence is irresistible and ineradicable. It bores deeply into one’s being, even below the level of awareness. It both warms the heart *and* upsets one’s apple cart. It portends an undoing of the false, even as it promises a new creation beyond.

The reception of the Word-Seed brings its own self-validating assurance. No external authority, no sanction of orthodoxy can compare. In the words of *Matthew*, at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount, “When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.” (Matthew 7:28-29)

And so it is with the testimony of many thousands of students of *A Course in Miracles*; the tree is known by its fruit. You experience a light in the mind and heart. You feel truly closer to other people, with genuine sympathy and understanding towards their unarticulated experiences. Defenses fall away. You release a spontaneity in unscripted daily encounters with

others that communicate joy, acceptance, and assurance. You bear witness to the heart of life that transcends roles and can never be straitjacketed by tidy formalities. You move through life with more faith and

generosity — and “faith” here is not doctrine but *trust*. You arrive at the unshakable conviction that the purpose of life is to vindicate the open hand, not perpetuate the grasping and punitive fist. The lesson of the crucifixion is, “Teach only love, for that is what you are.” (T-6.I.13) And the lesson of the resurrection is, “nothing can destroy truth.” (T-3.I.7) Every seed is crucified in form, but resurrected in spirit.

A Course in Miracles describes this tree of salvation as the Atonement, the reconciliation of the collective human

mind with the Christ within. Just as a giant sequoia grows over a period of thousands of years, so the Atonement slowly incorporates heart by heart over millennia. The Atonement is a strong chain formed of miracles. Miracles are contagious. The act of extending forgiveness to another extends the Word of Christ far more effectively than mere concepts or preaching. The forgiven are compelled, by Heaven, to be forgiving in their turn on earth.

This Sequoia of Salvation is not hindered by governmental policies, nor is it the exclusive property of any religion, -ism, or -ology. It is known by many names and indicated by many symbols. It lives in your heart as faith, hope and charity, decency and altruism, wisdom, and compassion. And just as fires periodically burn through the sequoia groves, so the political and environmental antics of humans burn through societies and civilizations, but the Tree of the Atonement outlasts them all, and continues to rise in majesty and power.



Radek and Mir in front of the General Sherman tree

“This was no fable, but a fact: these trees towering before us, ancient in majesty and quiescence, came from these tiny seeds.”

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Utter Practicality



by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

A reporter had been invited to India to interview the Dalai Lama, and he was pleasantly surprised to be invited to pray with the monks before his meeting.

As the reporter sat in his peaceful pose and closed his eyes, his stomach began growling. He had forgotten to eat because of the time change and the excitement of meditating with the monks. Now, his stomach was...

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Share a Miracle

It's All About Two People and a Table

by Tess Patton

"Above all else I want to see things differently. When you say, 'Above all else I want to see this table differently,' you are making a commitment to withdraw your preconceived ideas about the table, and open your mind to what it is, and what it is for. You are not defining it in past terms. You are asking what it is, rather than telling it what it is. You are not binding its meaning to your tiny experience of tables, nor are you limiting its purpose to your little personal thoughts." (W-28.3)

As students of *A Course in Miracles*, we often fail to grasp the magnitude of something so simple yet usually overlooked in our day-to-day lives. But seeing truly, everything we encounter, being part of love itself, is quite profound. I wanted to share a story about two simple tables that changed my illusion forever.

My husband, Tim, and I met 30 years ago when he was asked by my cousin to deliver a table she had to my mother's home. This tricky cousin also asked my mother if she would be willing to store the table for her. It was a plan to set up Tim and me to meet, but this information was not shared with my mother or the two of us. I must say that I thought the table was atrocious, but I found Tim, the delivery man, to be handsome and easy to talk to. That evening, they invited me to join them for dinner, but instead of accepting their invitation to go out, I told them I had to stay home as it was Beverly's mother, Tona's, birthday the next day, and I needed to bake her a cake. My cousin was very disappointed in me!

Her plan to set Tim and me up as a couple eventually worked out, but it wouldn't occur until a year later when we reunited at the same cousin's wedding. We dated from that day forward and were married

a year and a half later. Being on the older side, we entered into this marriage wanting to start a family quickly and had our first beautiful daughter, Casey, a little over a year later. And then two and a half years after that, we were blessed with our second beauty, Tara.



"I must say that I thought the table was atrocious, but I found Tim, the delivery man, to be handsome and easy to talk to."

To fast-forward this story, my daughter, Tara, told us at Christmas time in 2023 that she would be getting married six months later, and we started planning quickly for an amazing outdoor

wedding. I was thrilled to take on the challenge of planning and executing this simple yet elegant event, and with the fantastic help of my entire family, we pulled it off to perfection! Tara and I had an excellent time planning, shopping at the thrift stores, and creating all the beautiful decorations that would adorn this amazing backyard wedding party.

I had an old dining room table that I had been saving in my garage for some future, unknown to me, use. Now I knew what I had been saving it for. I was determined to refinish this table for Tara and her husband-to-be, Brandon, to use as the bride and groom's head table. No one wanted me to do it. My daughter feared she would think it was ugly, not want to use it, and hurt my feelings. My husband said it was too much work.

But something inside me said I had to do it, even if they decided not to use it. I was determined to bring back the original beauty of this old thing. A thought struck me while in my driveway, wearing old paint clothes, and prepping for this big job ahead of me. It was really more of an epiphany, as I methodically sanded off the old varnish and lacquer, restoring it to its raw walnut wood glory, and lovingly applied wax in slow, circular motions: **"It was all about two people and a table!"** The first table brought my husband and me together. This table, which held so many memories in every little crevice, would bring Tara and Brandon together.

"You could, in fact, gain vision from just that table, if you would withdraw all your own ideas from it, and look upon it with a completely open mind. It has something to show you; something beautiful and clean and of infinite value, full of happiness and hope. Hidden under all your ideas about it is its real purpose, the purpose it shares with all the universe." (W-28.5)

I bought this particular table in 2006 for \$15.00 at the Salvation Army thrift store, and it has served as a joining place for our family for 17 years. I was immensely flooded with so many wonderful memories of the nights we spent around this table: birthday parties, coloring eggs, building gingerbread houses, doing art projects, doing homework, reading books until 3:00 am, and then writing the book report the following morning, dreary-eyed, and countless other activities. And, of course, Thanksgiving dinners, endless conversa-

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Tess Patton is lovingly referred to as MDC's "Center Mom" and has been a member of MDC's staff since 1992. She lives in Fullerton, CA, with her husband, Tim. Tess is available to serve Course students by contacting the Center at 714-632-9005 or tess@miraclecenter.org.



Murder, Military, and Miracles

by Richard Gayton, Ph.D.

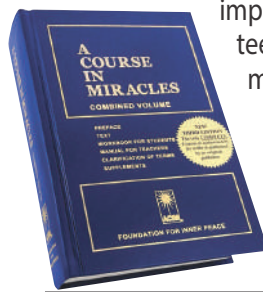
"I am not the victim of the world I see." (W-31)

This morning, I read the front page of the New York Times and dropped in on Fox News just to see their spin on the news, and, as always, I find the world pre-occupied with violence. At that time, our President was trying to decide whether to drop a really big bomb on what seemed like some really bad guys. My ego is easily captured by violent images: a target astoundingly clear in the crosshair sights of jet aircraft, and then an explosion. Compelling destruction and strangely sanitized death, the illusion that we kill without consequence. I feel guilty for my fascination, my error. But also, hopefulness: Can war stop a bigger war? Did they deserve to be killed?

I know violence well. I was a soldier and learned to kill. I am glad I never did. Certainly, the world would say my family, and particularly my wife, were the victims of violence when our home was invaded by two people looking for money; my wife was stabbed to death, and my bookkeeper was grievously wounded. I felt the victim of the world I saw, the victim of these two people, and of a community that failed to stop them. In reality, my reaction as a father, a psychologist, and as a human was to unwittingly victimize myself with the loss. I hated the people who murdered, and I plotted their torture and death. Then I turned inward, wanting to take my own life. Rejecting that course of action, I descended into dark depression and produced a tumor that required an intricate surgery to save my face from falling.

Yet horrific violence and suffering brought me *A Course in Miracles*, as my brother-in-law plopped the heavy blue book with the gold letters on my bed, as I wondered if I could face another day of

the nightmare. Despite my reaction to the word "Miracles" in the title, its gentle words of love and hope jumped out as the words of Jesus, whom I knew from a loving Christian mother who told me about him. The Course became my guide for recovery, my constant solace as the murderers were imprisoned, one an older teenage girl, the other a man in his twenties.



I wanted the death penalty, but I listened to the Voice for God to forgive. I wrote *The Forgiving Place*:

"Yet horrific violence and suffering brought me A Course in Miracles, as my brother-in-law plopped the heavy blue book with the gold letters on my bed ..."

Choosing Peace after Violent Trauma and was a guest on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, and the book then sold out. My ego was in heaven. I continued in my study and practice of the principles of *A Course in Miracles* and took in the outpouring of love we received from so many. I was amazed at the inner peace, moment to moment, I experienced from doing the Course workbook lessons and practicing radical forgiveness of everyone around me, but most importantly, forgiving myself, for surviving, for not protecting my wife, for not saving my children from the aftermath of murder. I was no longer the victim, as the world I saw changed into a place of love and joy.

Over the years, I felt proud of forgiving

the killers, but my ego can ruin anything. The Voice suggested I contact them, which I refused to do. My "ego had been good, and had deigned to forgive, and to not put itself through watching a death penalty style execution," since violence is not so entertaining up front and personal. Forgiveness remained incomplete in me, so again, I felt depression. The Voice counseled me to write them in prison, as I had somehow made some "agreement." What on earth did that mean? I wrote a letter of forgiveness to each of them, not expecting a reply, or was I hoping I would get no reply?

I received a strained letter from the young man who did the stabbing, as if the whole thing had not happened, and from the woman, Michele, I received a beautiful letter of remorse and her attempts to redeem her life in prison through art and attending spiritual groups. I felt a powerful relief, but emotionally, "I washed my hands" of both, having done my "spiritual duty." Then the Voice suggested I needed to visit Michele in prison. I was frightened because I knew I would do it. We visited and had a happy meeting as if it were some kind of reunion. Have you had that experience when you follow the Voice for Peace and you are given an unexpected miracle?

It's like we had known each other before, though we had never met. I visited several times, hating the prison environment, but happy to talk with her. I testified in support of her release at parole hearings, which upset lots of folks with me, and some unsympathetic hearing officers excoriated her over and over for her crime. Yet she was steadfast in her recovery, taking responsibility for her actions, helping other women in prison, and expanding her

Continued on page 14

Richard Gayton is a psychologist, writer, and filmmaker. He hosts the interview show *Halo Love in Country* on YouTube. His film *Love in Country* is streaming on Tubi, Amazon, and YouTube. His novel by the same name, as well as *The Forgiving Place*, are both available for purchase on Amazon.

artistic expression. *The Tyra Banks Show* interviewed us both, me in person, and Michele from prison. My ego again loved the attention.

Miracle Distribution Center (MDC) started its Prison Project, sending Course-themed books to inmates. Michele was one of those inmates who received books and corresponded with MDC. She was finally released after twenty-plus years in prison. Beverly asked both Michele and me to speak at an MDC Conference, and we accepted. I had done some artwork in the past, and Michele was quite accomplished at drawing and painting, so we created a six-foot-high mural painted while kneeling on the floor at my house. We presented it at the conference, depicting our mutual journey to healing. What a lovely high to have such a reconciliation, and the opportunity to share with so many of my fellow Course students and receive their love and support.

My children are grown, and my oldest grandson just graduated from college, so the miracle of life, love, and healing goes on despite “my world’s” endemic violence. I had been an Army Transportation Officer and a Medical Service Corps Naval Officer during the Vietnam War. Although I did not see combat, I knew all about the practice of making war and its suffering. In 2023, Indie Rights Movies released the multiple award-winning feature film *Love in Country* about two gay men who fall in love during combat. I wrote and directed this film and collaborated with 170 others who wanted to see these two gay soldiers striving for love and forgiveness while serving their country in war, when LGBTQ+ people were universally reviled for daring to be in the military.

The cast and crew experienced firsthand the simulation of war on movie sets, filming in multiple locations. Even pretending to do violence awakens the passions of the ego. Cast and crew sometimes came close to fist fights as we attempted artistic

expression and the logistics of movie-making in rainforests and rice fields among snakes and insects. Interpersonal relationships frayed under the enormous stress. That is a whole other story of love and forgiveness, but haven’t we all seen violent words or actions happen when people get hungry, angry, lonely, or tired? The body does not sustain peace well when it is deprived of what it needs. It also turns on others in hatred

when it sees people who appear different. Our actors were telling the story of hatred directed at soldiers with a different sexual orientation.

The movie is about love and the exception the ego tried to make for LGBTQ+ soldiers. I saw this discrimination firsthand during my time as a Navy Psychologist, where violence and hatred were directed at LGBTQ+ people as the Navy actively hunted down some of their best and brightest. Yet love always overcomes hatred, and forgiveness disables the effects of violence.

The nation seems to have forgiven us now, although not all of us: again, it made an exception for transgender soldiers, suddenly discharging them this year for no other reason than they were different than the majority. We

now ask the world to make no exceptions and love them, too. Even though we invite acceptance from the world, we begin by avoiding seeing the problem somewhere other than in our own thinking. The Course asks us to make no exceptions to love, and it calls upon LGBTQ+ people to forgive those who hate them. This is how we avoid becoming “victims of the world we see,” or perpetrating violence on others. We forgive all for all.

For the suffering of violence, some of us avoid watching the images on television or the internet. I find this helpful at times. Other times, I watch and listen to remind myself of the strong illusion of hatred that is around me and, above all, within me. It leaks into my consciousness just by living in modern culture. I need to be present for others’ suffering from all the illusions and self-hatred generated by violence. I can avoid watching it on television, but then how am I to know that there were four thousand competent, dedicated transgender soldiers who were assaulted and discharged?

Yet all of us are affected by violence, and it can cut in so many directions. I hear a straight soldier’s story on our podcast *Halo Love in Country* of killing a child because the boy wandered into a free fire zone at night when the soldier could hardly see, and he shot the boy as a matter of duty ... and the soldier must live with this knowledge and somehow forgive himself. I must sit with these images and actions, loving those who carry them. I hear the lesbi-

an Navy aviation mechanic speak of working on fighter jets, flying combat missions from an aircraft carrier, and then being brutalized by other sailors because of her sexual orientation and left without support by her command. I must be present in love for her. I do this by listening to their stories and

presenting them for others to hear and understand.

As Hugh Prather always said, “The world



“We presented it at the conference, depicting our mutual journey to healing. What a lovely high to have such a reconciliation, and the opportunity to share with so many of my fellow Course students ...”



“‘Love in Country’ about two gay men who fall in love during combat ... striving for love and forgiveness while serving their country in war...”

doesn't work." It simply can't. It is the invention of our crazy egos, spinning tales of insane solutions as if we could use just the "right amount" of violence with the "right people," we will all achieve peace. The problem is always when we choose violence in this world, we hurt our brother or sister, who is just "us." Such a grand insanity, we think we can hurt others, solve some kind of problem, and not hurt ourselves in the process. Yet I must also be present in love for the political leader who is faced with such decisions.

As I am writing this, the President decided to drop the bunker buster bombs. We are all excited, or afraid. I feel relieved. Perhaps this got rid of a vicious regime's nuclear weapons. I can feel the human temptation to think this solved a problem. Did it succeed? I don't know, but we step into the ego anytime we use violence, with very good justification or not. The ego is an angel of light that always brings darkness. Illusion builds on illusion in a seemingly never-ending spiral of darkness, yet we are promised it will end. We can participate in speeding toward peace. We can choose not to hurt people with violence or hatred. When we fail at this, we become victims of the world we see. Psychologically, violence is always the result of projection, so we first do to ourselves what we are doing to others. We choose our own victimhood, but as Jesus counsels us, to choose again because there is always another way.

Today, there was a ceasefire in the war. What is next? The ego loves the drama. When ceasefires fail, we frequently choose more violence. I give an easy answer, but one that is hard to do: I can look away from the sin of others and see them as children of God. They are "us" in a terrible disguise. If I am having difficulty, I ask Jesus to help. He has promised to always be there. When we fail to love and fail in asking for help, we again must forgive ourselves, choose again, start over, and take heart as we look into the darkness of violence. The light is bright even in the darkness. People want peace. We are promised that we are all entering the Ark of Peace together and going home, a journey without distance to a destination we never left.

Welcome home, to all my brothers and sisters.

It's All About Two People

Continued from page 12

tions, board games, laughter, joining, and meals enjoyed with friends and extended family.

Chef Jose Andres said, "A meal together is not just a plate of food. It has the power to change the world and to bring people together. To tell the story of who we are and where we are going. We should build longer tables, not higher walls."



"This table, which held so many memories in every little crevice, would bring Tara and Brandon together."

My mother modeled this behavior for me as she sat around her table with those she loved, feeding, counseling, and nourishing their souls. That is a tradition I wanted to carry on for my family. I knew that a new family would be starting around this table for my daughter and her husband, and I couldn't wait to make the same wonderful traditions, memories, and meals with them and watch their family grow around their table.

I never understood how profoundly these memories would touch me until I refinished that old table! Such magic and memories an unvarnished table can hold and has held for my family and friends over its many years of loving service. We can take the simplest things in our life and give them a little love and be amazed by all they have to offer us!

"Love, too, would set a feast before you, on a table covered with a spotless cloth, set in a quiet garden where no sound but singing and a softly joyous whispering is ever heard. This is a feast that honors your holy relationship, and at which everyone is welcomed

as an honored guest ... And I will join you there, as long ago I promised and promise still. For in your new relationship am I made welcome. And where I am made welcome, there I am."

(T-19.IV.A.16)



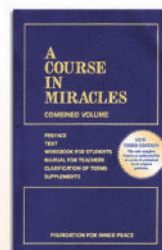
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- A Transcendental Place of Heavenly Vibrations
- The Art of Allowing
- The Sequoia of Salvation
- It's All About Two People and a Table
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2026 CALENDAR

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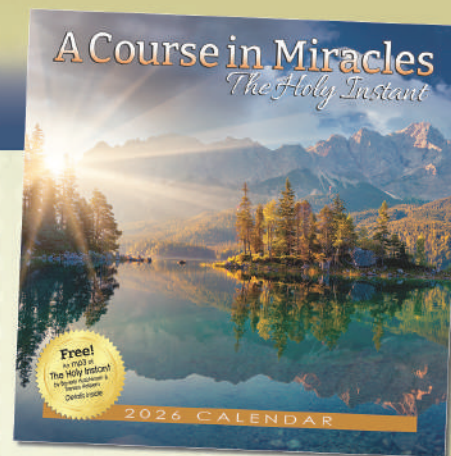
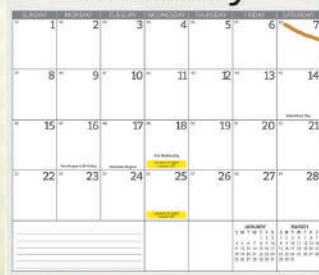


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