

Summing up A Course in Miracles

by Nicole Rose

Marianne Williamson once said that if she could, in one word, sum up Jesus's message to us in **A Course in Miracles**, it would be to "relax." I tend to agree with Marianne's take on what **The Course** is petitioning us to *do*. Yet, what it wants us to *experience* and *extend* from that state of relaxation is Love.

When we relax, we loosen up what was tightened, we soften what was hardened, we let go of what was held, and we open what was closed. Relaxation is synonymous with Forgiveness—it's a full body exhale from an in-breath held too long by the tyranny of a fearful mind. Forgiveness, **The Course** reminds us, is our only function, and when we are fulfilling our God-given function, we quite literally *are* the light of the world. Over and over again **The Course** bids us to forgive, not only our selves and other people, but the entire world and all of our judgments about it. It defines forgiveness as something radically different from what is commonly believed. It is not a pardon of one's wrong doing, but rather the realization that what we once believed happened, in *Truth* never did—a hard pill to swallow for most people, but one that will eventually be digested if one stays dedicated to The Course's daily lessons. **The Course in Miracle's Workbook for Students** leads us through a purification of the mind and a complete transformation of one's perception.

Though universal in theme, **A Course in Miracles** is colored throughout by Christian terms. It's rich explanations, however, transform the meaning of those terms from their familiar biblical definitions. For instance, the word sin is defined as a lack of love and is something to be corrected not condemned. The Course's outlined lessons are fundamentally practical and the application of each step, deeply personal. It's imperative to realize that every word is being spoken directly to *you*. The Course isn't meant to be theoretical. Instead it asks us to apply its teaching, embody its principals and experience directly for ourselves, the awareness of God's Love.

This is, in a nutshell, the long journey of **The Course** made short. In **The Course's** own words: "The Course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. It does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance. The opposite of love is fear, but what is all-encompassing can have no opposite. **This Course** can therefore be summed up very simply in this way:

Nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists.

Herein lies the peace of God."