

A Biblical Response To “A Course in Miracles”

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Deut 32:28 "They are a nation without sense, there is no discernment in them."

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From Contender Ministries this is an excellent response to “A Course in Miracles”. The impact will be great from this book because of Oprah Winfrey’s endorsement. Oprah Winfrey has been an advocate of the New Age Movement which is influencing many women.

We need to have answers for those who are following the “broad path” to destruction.

A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO A COURSE IN MIRACLES

The Course in Miracles often speaks of Jesus Christ, God, the atonement, sin, and other Christian terms. However, when examined closely, it becomes very clear that the meanings given to these Christian terms are far more consistent with the New Age movement than Christianity or the Bible.

CREATION

Throughout the Course, the world is explained as simply an illusion created by the ego of man. The Bible however, teaches that the ego of man had nothing to do with the creation of the world.

Genesis 1:1 “In the Beginning God created the heaven and the earth”.

John 1:3 “All things were made by Him(Jesus); and without him was not anything made that was made.”

Paul writes in Col 1:16, “For by Him(Jesus), were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth.”

There was a creation for sure, but it was not done by man’s ego. All things were created by God alone.

REVELATION AND “ALL PATHS LEAD TO GOD”

On the topic of revelation, we should first realize that A Course in Miracles consistently contradicts Jesus own words, so it cannot come from the Jesus of the Bible. A Course in Miracles teaches that revelations are completely subjective and do not have to be consistent with another persons revelation or the revelation in the Bible.

A Course in Miracles vol.1, p.5 – “Revelation is intensely personal and cannot be meaningfully translated”

On The Course itself the text states “The Course is but one version of the universal curriculum. There are many others...They all lead to God in the end”

I Thessalonians 5:20-21 tells us “Do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good”. According to the Bible, not all prophecy is necessarily from God and we should test these claims against the Word of God so that we might separate truth from fiction. Jesus also commanded the church at Ephesus because “you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false” (Rev. 2:2). If all revelations were equally valid and were all from God, it would make no sense to commend the church for recognizing false apostles. The Bible makes it clear that not all people who claim to speak for God are to be trusted. The Bible also tells us how to recognize these false teachers. If A Course in Miracles were truly from Jesus it would agree with the Bible. Isaiah 8:20 “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn”.

All paths are not truth, and all teachings or beliefs are not to be trusted, especially if they teach that Jesus Christ is not the only one by whom we must be saved.

Luke 13:24 “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to”

John 10:8-9 “All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.”

THE INERRANT WORD OF GOD

A Course in Miracles makes the claim that the Bible is not without error. Apparently all revelation should be accepted as truth according to the Course, except the Bible. In the Bible's case, The Course takes the liberty of presenting needed corrections in the scriptures where it suits them.

A Course in Miracles, vol 1 page 28-29

“The statement ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life’ needs only one slight correction to be meaningful in this context; ‘He gave IT TO His only begotten Son’”.

In order to support their beliefs that Christ was not offered as a living sacrifice to cover our sins (sins they don't believe exist), they change this verse to mean that God gave Jesus the world instead of God offering His Son to the world as a sacrifice. Since the Course defines the “Son” as each of us, the consequence of this revision is that instead of the world being given Jesus Christ, the world is given to us. They twist this verse further by believing that the “Him” in the verse means

ourselves since we are the son's of God. Instead of, as the Bible teaches, believing that belief in Christ saves us, the Course teaches that belief in oneself saves us.

Volume One page 87 also states that “the Apostles often misunderstood the crucifixion...and out of their own fear they spoke of the ‘wrath of God’ as His retaliatory weapon...These are some of the examples of upside-down thinking in the New Testament...If the Apostles had not felt guilty, they never could have quoted me as saying ‘I come not to bring peace but a sword’. This is clearly the opposite of everything I taught.”

2 Timothy 3:16 says ,”All scripture is God-breathed”, and 1 Thessalonians 2:13 says that preaching of the Bible should be received “not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe” Jesus also said of the Old Testament scriptures that they are “the word of God” (Mk 7:13) that “cannot be broken” (John 10:35). The Course in Miracles refutes the inerrancy of the Bible largely because it does not support their teachings on so many things.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

A Course in Miracles teaches the idea of monism (or the belief that all is one), pantheism (the belief that God is in everything), and panentheism (the belief that all are a part of God).

A Course in Miracles, Vol. 2, p.92

“In my own mind, behind all my insane thoughts of separation...is the knowledge that all is one forever. I have not lost the knowledge of who I am because I have forgotten it. It has been kept for me in the Mind of God, Who has not left His thoughts. And I, who am among them, am one with them and one with Him.”

A Course in Miracles, vol. 2, p. 45

“God is in everything I see”

Vol. 1, Page 92

“God is still everywhere and in everything forever. And we are a part of Him”.

Vol. 1, p. 165

“Whenever you question your value, say: ‘God Himself is incomplete without me’”.

Vol. 1, p. 136

“The recognition of God is the recognition of yourself. There is no separation of God and His creation”.

The Bible is clear that God is distinct from His creation. John 4:24 tells us that God is spirit, but we are flesh. Psalms 50:21 tells us that God is unlike man ethically, “You thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you”. God is righteous and holy (Lev. 11:44, 19:2; Isa 6:3) and He distinguishes sin from righteousness.

Isaiah 5:20 “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness who put better for sweet and sweet for bitter.”

Romans 1 also makes it clear that God is distinct from His creation. He is the Creator and divine in nature while the creation is not.

Romans 1:20-24

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised.”

It is also wrong to think that sin has not created a separation between God and mankind. Isaiah 59:1-2 says “Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save. Nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.” This is why Christ was sent as a mediator and a ransom to set us free from the sins we have committed so that we can receive our promised inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).

THE NATURE AND DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

A Course in Miracles teaches that Jesus and those who accept Him are equal.

A Course in Miracles, vol. 1, p. 5

“Equals should not be in awe of one another because awe implies inequality. It is therefore and inappropriate reaction to me. An elder brother is entitled to respect for his greater experience, and obedience for his greater wisdom...There is nothing about me that you cannot attain”.

Vol. 1, p. 70-71

“My mind will always be like yours, because we were created as equals. It was only my decision that gave me all power in heaven and earth. My only gift to you is to help you make the same decision”.

The Bible does not teach that we are equal with Christ; it teaches that Jesus is both God and man. As God, Jesus does not possess sinful desires, susceptibility to temptation, or mortality, which are all attributes of sinful man. Because Jesus is also God, He is not equal to us as we are not deity. In John 8:23 Jesus said, “You are of this world; I am not of this world.”

John 1:1-3 tells us that Jesus was God the Son, the eternal Word who created the universe. He took on mortal, human nature and came “in human likeness” (Philippians 2:7). At Christ’s resurrection Jesus retained His human nature and His divine nature as God, and His physical body was changed from mortal to immortal (1 Co. 15). While Jesus is God the Son who took on human form, we as human beings have only one nature, a human nature.

A Course in Miracles also teaches that Jesus should not be understood as a sacrificial lamb for our sins.

A Course in Miracles vol. 1, p. 33

“I have been correctly referred to as ‘the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world,’ but those who represent the lamb as blood-stained do not understand the meaning of the symbol. Correctly understood, it is a very simple symbol that speaks of my innocence...Innocence is incapable of sacrificing anything, because the innocent mind has everything and strives only to protect its wholeness”.

The Course denies I Peter 2:24 which reads, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been set free.” The Course denies even the need for Christ’s sacrifice because they teach that people are already sinless and perfect beings. You have to wonder what planet these people have been living on. Examples of just such sin can be seen all around us. The Bible is very clear that we are reconciled to God through the death of his Son (Romans 5:10).

The Course distorts the Bible even further, however, by claiming that Jesus Christ wasn't the Son of God, but rather we are the Son's of God referred to in these scriptures.

A Course in Miracles, Vol. 1, p.2

“The Sonship is the sum of all that God created”.

Vol. 1, p.14

“In the creation, God extended Himself to His creations and imbued them with the same loving will to create. You...have also been created perfect. There is no emptiness in you.”

Vol. 2, pp. 353-354

“You are the holy Son of God Himself. And with this holy thought you learn as well that you have freed the world...All power is given you in Earth and Heaven. There is nothing that you cannot do.”

The Course requires the student to affirm, “Your Son...is but what I really am in truth. He is the Son You love above all things. He is my Self as You created me. It is not Christ that can be crucified.”

The Bible states clearly that Jesus is God's only begotten Son (John 1:18; 3:16; 1 John 4:9) The term “only begotten Son” is never used to refer to believers in the New Testament, but only to Jesus. Jesus Christ is the only Son of God. However, the word sons (plural) and “children of God” are applied to Jesus' followers several times in Romans, 1 John and elsewhere. Christians are not “sons of God” by nature but we become sons of God (Romans 8:15).

Galatians 4:4-7

“But when the tie had fully come, God sent his Son born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba”, Father. So you are no longer a slave but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”

Unlike Jesus, who is eternally the Son of God (Ps 2:7; Heb 1:2,4) we obtain a derivative

relationship through faith: “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:26).

Further discounting the sacrifice made by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, A Course in Miracles teaches that Jesus is but a man who found Christ in other people and is no more the Christ than anyone else.

A Course in Miracles vol. 3, p. 83

“The name of Jesus is the name of one who was a man but saw the face of Christ in all his brothers and remembered God. So he became identified with Christ, a man no longer, but at one with God. The man was an illusion, for he seemed to be a separate being, walking by himself, within a body that appeared to hold his self from Self, as all illusions do.”

“Jesus remains a Savior because he was the false without accepting it as true. And Christ needed his form that He might appear to men and save them from their own illusions”.

Jesus, of course, never taught this. When Peter said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16), Jesus did not reply, “Yes, and so are you”. When the woman at the well said, “I know that Messiah is coming,” Jesus replied “I who speak to you am he”. He didn’t say, “We are each the Christ”. Furthermore, the word Christ cannot refer to all people everywhere. The Old Testament was very clear about who the Christ, or the Messiah, would be, where he would be born, when he would be born, and who he would descend from. (Mic 5:2; Dan 9:24-27; Mt 22:42)

The Course also teaches that the resurrection of Jesus should not be understood as a literal, physical return from the dead. According to the Course, the body does not exist and death does not exist. Thus, Jesus could not have been raised from the dead in any real sense.

A Course in Miracles, vol. 1, p. 87

“...the resurrection is the symbol of sharing because the reawakening of every Son of God is necessary to enable the Sonship to know its wholeness”

Vol. 3, p. 65

“The resurrection is a reawakening or rebirth: a change of mind about the meaning of the world.”

Vol. 1, p. 396

“A slain Christ has no meaning. But a risen Christ becomes the symbol of the Son of God’s forgiveness on himself; the sign he looks upon himself as healed and whole.”

The reality that Christ “died for our sins” and subsequently was raised on the third day is the heart of the gospel.

1 Co 15:3-6

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance; that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures and that he appeared to Peter and then to the twelve. After that he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time,”

The physical nature of Jesus’ resurrection was part of the apostolic message. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter said that the messianic psalms of King David “spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay” (Acts 2:31)

When Christ appeared to “doubting Thomas” and the other apostles to show His pierced hands, feet, and side, it is clear that He was showing His physical body and that this was not a visionary experience.

Luke 24:38-39 “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in you mind? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

A Course in Miracles teaches that sin does not exist, and each person is perfectly guiltless and innocent. In other words no one is sinful in any way.

A Course in Miracles Vol. 1, p. 88

“No one is punished for sins, and the Sons of God are not sinners”

Vol. 1, p. 423

“The Holy Spirit will never teach you that you are sinful”

Vol. 1, p. 377

“When you are tempted to believe that sin is real, remember this: If sin is real, both God and you are not”

The Bible teaches that sin affects all people.

Ecc 7:20

“For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin”

The Bible also addresses those who, like followers of the Course in Miracles, deny the reality of sin:

1 John 1:8 “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us”

It doesn't get any plainer than that. Nowhere in the Bible are we told that sin is merely an illusion. We will all be held accountable to God (Romans 3:19).

In order to explain the obvious sin that surrounds each and every one of us in this world on a daily basis, the Course teaches that sin appears to exist, but this is a false illusion or an insane thought caused by the ego.

A Course in Miracles, Vol. 2, p. 409

“Sin is insanity. It is the means by which the mind is driven mad, and seeks to let illusions take the place of truth...And yet what sin perceives is but a childish game. The Son of God may play he has become a body, prey to evil and to guilt, with but a little life that ends in death. But all the while his Father shines on him...There is no sin”

Vol. 2, p. 327

“The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his ‘sins’ are but his own imagining. His reality is forever sinless. He need not be forgiven but awakened. In his dreams he has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done”

The Bible does not teach that sin is an error to be corrected, or an illusion that does not exist. Rather, sin is a wrongful act and condition of mankind that requires repentance, remission, and forgiveness.

Hebrews 9:22

“Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness”

Hebrews 9:26

“now he [Jesus Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The remedy for sin is not “waking up” as the Course teaches. Repentance and confession is the only remedy. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy” (Pr 28:13)

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

A Course in Miracles teaches that man’s original state is perfection. Salvation in the Course comes by undoing the misbelief that we are separated from God and are sinful beings. We simply arrive at a state of awareness that we are perfect.

A Course in Miracles Vol 1, p. 9

“The purpose of the Atonement is to restore everything to you; or rather, to restore it to your awareness.”

A Course in Miracles Vol. 1, p. 6

“I am in charge of the process of Atonement, which I undertook to begin. When you offer a miracle to any of my brothers, you do it to yourself and me. The reason you come before me is that I do not need miracles for my own Atonement, but I stand at the end in case you fail temporarily. My part in the Atonement is the canceling out of all errors that you could not otherwise correct. When you have been restored to the recognition of your original state, you naturally become part of the Atonement yourself”

In the New Testament, atonement, propitiation, and reconciliation are intertwined with the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. In Christ we now receive “atonement” (Romans 5:11). Through the blood of Jesus we obtain “propitiation” (Romans 3:25). It is Jesus who is the atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 John 2:2; 4:10). Atonement does not open our eyes to our own perfection, but instead covers our sins before God. Only through the acceptance of the sacrifice Christ made on the cross can we be saved.

It makes sense that the Course would completely ignore the sacrifice Christ made for our sins, since it teaches that God did not allow His Son to die on the cross for our salvation.

A Course in Miracles, vol. 1, p. 32

“If the crucifixion is seen from an upside-down point of view, it does appear as if God permitted and even encouraged one of His Sons to suffer because he was good... Yet the real Christian should pause and ask, ‘How could this be?’ Is it likely that God Himself would be capable of the kind of thinking which His Own words have clearly stated is unworthy of His Son?”

A Course in Miracles, vol. 1, p. 32

“Persecution frequently results in an attempt to justify the terrible misperception that God Himself persecuted His Own Son on behalf of salvation. The very words are meaningless... In milder forms a parent says, ‘This hurts me more than it hurts you’, and feels exonerated in beating a child. Can you believe our Father really thinks this way? It is so essential that all such thinking be dispelled that we must be sure that nothing of this kind remains in your mind. I was not ‘punished’ because you were bad. The wholly benign lesson the Atonement teaches is lost if it is tainted with this kind of distortion in any form”

It is clear in the New Testament that Jesus Christ died on the cross for the sins of mankind.

1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit”.

The Old Testament also teaches that it was the will of God the Father to sacrifice Jesus Christ for us.

Isaiah 53:5 “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

The Course follows the thinking of Peter before the resurrection – a line of thinking he was clearly rebuked for.

Matthew 16:21-23

When Jesus told the disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and be killed, Peter said this must not happen. Jesus replied, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men”.

The Course contends that the reason for Christ’s crucifixion was to induce people to love one another.

A Course in Miracles, vol. 1, p.87

“The message of the crucifixion is perfectly clear: ‘Teach only love, for that is what you are’. If you interpret the crucifixion in any other way, you are using it as a weapon for assault rather than as the call for peace for which it was intended”.

The Bible addresses just such thinking this way:

1 Corinthians 1:18; 15:3-4

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Continuing their teaching that there is no sin, the Course teaches that there is no Hell or eternal

punishment.

A Course in Miracles, vol. 1, p. 281

“The Holy Spirit teaches thus: There is no hell. Hell is only what the ego has made of the present”

Scripture, however, teaches us that there will be eternal punishment for the wicked and the unrepentant.

Matthew 13:41-42

“The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”.

Revelation 20:15

“If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”.

On the subject of Christ’s return, the Course teaches that the Second Coming and final judgment are not meant to punish sinners, but to heal the mind, rectify mistakes, and dispel the illusions we have believed in.

A Course in Miracles vol. 1, pp. 29-30

“Judgment is not an attribute of God... The Last Judgment is generally thought of as a procedure undertaken by God. Actually, it will be undertaken by my brothers with my help. It is a final healing rather than a meting out of punishment, however much you may think that punishment is deserved.”

Vol. 2, p. 439

“Christ’s Second Coming, which is sure as God, is merely the correction of mistakes, and the return of sanity.”

Vol. 2, p. 445

“The Final Judgment on the world contains no condemnation. For it sees the world as totally forgiven, without sin and wholly purposeless.”

Judgment is a basic attribute of God.

Isaiah 30:18

“The Lord is a God of judgment”

“Psalms 9:7-8 ‘He has established his throne for judgment. He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.’”

The Second Coming of Christ will be as literal and physical as His first coming was. “This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). This is not simply the arrival of a spirit or a thought in our minds. When Christ returns He will bring God’s punishment on the wicked.

II Thessalonians 1:7-9

“...the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.”