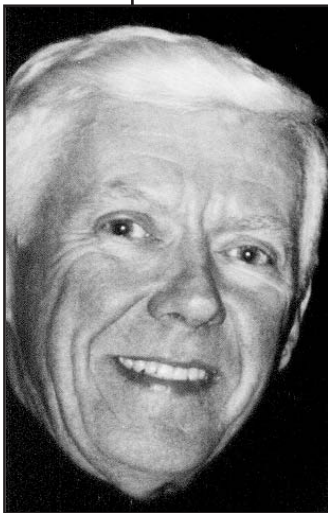


# The Spiritual Path of A Course in Miracles

by Erwin Braker, Fellowshipian

*Become the diligent observer who lets the useless thoughts stream by, giving energy only to the Loving thoughts and finally learning to hear the inner voice coming from your higher Self.*

Erwin Braker



In the process of mining more quotes for my ACIM Abstract, I found the following message:

*Many have chosen to renounce the world while still believing its reality. [W-155.4:2] Others have chosen nothing but the world, and they have suffered, [W-155.4:4] Between these paths there is another road that leads away from loss of every kind, for sacrifice and deprivation both are quickly left behind. [W-155.5:1] This is the way appointed for you now. [W-155.5:2] It asks that you accept the truth, [W-155.8:2] There is no cost, but only gain. [W-155.8:4] We walk to God. [W-155-12:1]*

Reading these words made me think of the first spiritual book I ever read from beginning to end, *The Road Less Traveled*, by M. Scott Peck. It opens with a sentence I would

call a Gem if I found it in the *Course*, "Life is difficult." His book had such a profound affect on my spiritual growth that I was very troubled when years later, after I had been touched by ACIM, I read his *Further Along the Road Less Traveled*. In this second book he denounced my beloved *Course* on the grounds that it did not deal realistically with evil. His view of the New Age movement being based on denial of evil runs counter to his own experiences as a psychiatrist. His book, *People of the Lie*, builds a strong

case for the existence of much true evil in the world. We have all recently been bombarded by media accounts of the BTK serial killer, who appears to be evil to the core.

This all raises some important questions. Who or What are we? Is BTK one of us? The *Course* teaches, "If you are spirit, then the body must be meaningless to your reality. [W-96.3:7] If you remain as God created you, evil is not real," [W-110.1:4]

We are left with a paradox. BTK is an evil spirit, one with God who is Love. It was Peck who taught me that the presence of spiritual paradox is almost always an excellent indicator that you're getting close to truth. The

perennial mysteries and paradoxes surrounding good and evil can best be understood as a confusion of levels. At the worldly level, BTK is an evil illusion made by an out-of-control ego. At the spiritual level, BTK is spirit whose awareness of what he is has been obscured by his lack of attention or distorted attention to the "inner kingdom" he has to rule.

In philosophical discussions we are always brought back to the confusion of levels, whether it is in science, talking about parallel universes, or in spirituality, talking about different states of consciousness or levels of awareness. We New Thought people don't jump out windows without expecting to destroy our bodies just because we believe, at the spiritual level, the world, the body and evil are not real. The long term neighbor of BTK, who reported on CNN that she never locked her front door, may begin to lock it again, and still believe in oneness at a higher level than the earthly plain.

*As Jesus taught, we can be in the world and still not be of the world. The Course teaches that our upper mind, where spirit dwells, experiences only peace, love and joy. In the lower mind, where the ego dwells, we make hell suffering and pain. At this level "What you believe is true for you." [T-2.VII.5:5] There is no Hell. Hell is only what the ego has made of the present. [T-15.1.7:1,2] There is a way of living in the world that is not here, although it seems to be. [W-155.1:1] The body is merely part of your experience in the physical world. It is almost impossible to deny [the body's] existence in this world. [T-2.IV.3:8,10] This course does not attempt to take from you the little that you have." [W-133.2:3]*

There are no contradictions in these statements from the *Course* if you understand that the mind can operate at different levels. The road recommended in the *Course* workbook at the start of this article. [Lesson 155.] is, I believe, also another road less traveled.

It is a path of inner mind work. Learning to calm and still the mind. Become the diligent observer who lets the useless thoughts stream by, giving energy only to the Loving thoughts and finally, learning to hear the inner voice coming from your Higher Self. It is a path that I believe Jesus followed while on earth as he walked back to God from whence he came.