



Readers’ Experiences of Our New Complete and Annotated Edition of *A Course in Miracles*

In January, we released the Circle of Atonement’s new [Complete and Annotated Edition of A Course in Miracles](#) (“CE” for short). For this edition of A Better Way, we asked people who played some part in producing the CE how they are experiencing their reading of the new edition, now that it is the version of the Course that they are actually using day to day.

The responses to our requests are below. The titles of these responses (which are unedited or lightly edited lines from the responses themselves) were added by the editors of A Better Way.

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Jesus is right here with me

Jesus’ teachings as they appear in the Complete and Annotated Edition (CE) are taking me to new heights in my spiritual journey. They are giving me a deeper understanding and appreciation than I have ever had before.

The material, especially in the first chapters and in the cameo essays, is so very practical and straightforward, and Jesus is so down-to-earth. The CE is giving me an intimate glimpse into his relationship with Helen and Bill and how he wanted them to live his course, and, therefore, how he wants *me* to live it. Moreover, it is bringing me into an even closer relationship with him. As I read, I feel that Jesus is right here with me, talking to me directly, telling me in very concrete terms what I need to hear and to learn—and he does it so lovingly. This makes me truly want to “listen, learn, and do” in order to become the miracle worker I’m meant to be.

— Mary Anne Buchowski

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It’s helping me to “put it all together”

I learn best by seeing real life examples of whatever it is I’m learning. So when I started studying ACIM thirty years ago and ran into difficult passages, I wished I could read illuminating examples of how the ideas had already worked in other people’s lives. I wanted to see what it “looks like” to live the concepts of the Course.

That’s what the “cameos” and some of the other material in this new version do for me—they provide detailed examples of how Helen and Bill used, misused, or didn’t use the ideas in their daily lives, and the consequences. In fact, all of the “personal” things that Jesus said to them, things that were earlier omitted *because* they were deemed too personal, are really helpful when it comes to understanding how it all fits together. Even Helen and Bill’s doubts and struggles are helpful to know more about, maybe even especially helpful in a “don’t do it like this” kind of way.

I’m finding it helpful to have so much revealed in this volume that either has never been revealed before or which I had to discover in other writings about the Course or about Helen and Bill. This amazing effort to put it all together is helping me to “put it all together,” too.

In addition, and maybe most important of all, is the fact that certain textual corrections, even the smallest ones, are eye-opening and crucial to full understanding.

— Nancy Pickard

This is what I have been looking for

I am starting this new year off with the reading of *A Course in Miracles*—starting with the Text. This year I am reading from the Complete and Annotated Edition. The miracle principles have been difficult for me to understand in the past. With the addition of the cameo essays section of this more comprehensive edition of ACIM, I have examples of what Jesus was explaining to Helen about what these miracles mean—how they work in this world.

This is so helpful for me in my own understanding. This is what I have been looking for—a truly clear compilation of Helen’s original handwritten notes and the Urtext. Along with Robert’s in-depth knowledge and years of Course scholarship to add helpful notes and point out key messages, this edition is a one of a kind. I believe this is how the study of this course was intended to be.

— Ellen Frisch

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It has lit a fire under me

I have gotten a lot out of editing and now reading the Complete and Annotated Edition of *A Course in Miracles*. In particular, the first several chapters of the Text have come to life for me as never before. The material that has been restored to those chapters (plus the additional material in the cameo essays) makes me feel like I’m right there in the room with Helen and Bill, sitting at the feet of Jesus and receiving instruction that is both transcendently beautiful and eminently practical. The gentle firmness and patient urgency of that instruction has lit a fire under me to really become the miracle worker Jesus wants me to be. His promise is that “You will see miracles through your hands through me.” To this promise, I can only say “Amen!”

— Greg Mackie

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My study has been rejuvenated

What comes back to life in the Complete and Annotated Edition is the story of Helen and Bill. Early on in my attraction to the Course, I was fascinated with the story of the scribing years, as brought out in Ken Wapnick’s, *Absence From Felicity*.

In reading the new edition, the backstory accompanies me in the first several chapters. Jesus has a presence with Helen and Bill as he demonstrates how the Course is to be applied in practical daily life. Through reading the cameos I can see aspects of myself in both Helen’s and Bill’s journey with the Course. As a Course study group teacher, I find that the backstory material makes the Course more accessible to the group’s understanding.

This new material has opened me to a deeper personal relationship with Jesus as I take on my own story with the Course. The CE thins out the thick theoretical foundation of the Course, through the eyes of Helen and Bill’s journey. As a result my study has been rejuvenated, thank you!

— Dennis L. Chandler

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How practical is Jesus’ guidance!

I have always found the early chapters of the Course such a struggle. The miracle principles, for starters, just didn’t compute. The following four or five chapters were equally obtuse and problematic.

The Complete and Annotated Edition has unraveled the mysteries of these chapters for me, with the significant omissions now included, the editing errors corrected, and the right order of Helen’s dictation restored.

I find the cameos explaining the background of Helen’s and Bill’s personal struggles and challenges fascinating, enlightening, and very helpful. Gee, they were dealing with similar issues in their lives that have confronted me throughout mine. How practical is Jesus’ guidance!

I am appreciating and am grateful for Robert’s comprehensive, explanatory footnotes. I have always struggled understanding what the Text means. The footnotes help me enormously.

Congratulations to all who have been involved in this monumental project.

— Don De Lene

The original wording has helped me get a better understanding of the Course

I'm finding it really interesting to see the wording that was changed or removed from Helen's original dictation of the Course, to arrive at the version I am familiar with. In many cases, the original wording has helped me get a better understanding of the Course. That's especially true in Chapter 1. The miracle principles make a lot more sense now.

For the same reason, I think it's important to read each cameo essay when I reach the point where a given one is referenced in the footnotes. The material comes to life when you see how it played out in the lives of Helen and Bill. For example, the story of the Shield Report helped me get a better grasp on the meaning of the Atonement. Another example was when Jesus told Helen to give him charge of the minutiae in her life that she was getting bogged down in. I think that applies to me every bit as much as it did to Helen, and so I have been following that advice.

— Martha Fitzgerald

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My motivation to practice forgiveness and my desire to be a miracle worker have increased

My experience with reading the Complete and Annotated Edition is that it brings me more understanding of what the meaning of miracles is.

The contribution of the cameos has been a great support for me in understanding the topics they cover, including the new topics that Jesus brings up.

I've been feeling more that Jesus speaks to me personally; I'm especially discovering that I struggle sometimes with the same problems as Helen and Bill—such as shame, fear, uncertainty, and so on.

Also, as a result of my greater understanding of the miracle principles, my motivation to practice forgiveness and my desire to be a miracle worker have increased.

Sometimes I have the feeling that with the new insights gained from the new material, it is possible to experience miracles as a natural habit.

The journey with Jesus has become an exciting journey, which gives me more confidence that I can trust his knowing that the journey ends where I really am.

— Christien Snelders

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I have been inspired once again to begin daily readings

I've not read through the Text for several years. The Complete and Annotated Edition has so much new material in the early chapters that I have been inspired once again to begin daily readings. Beside the new material, much familiar material is presented in its original order so that I can now see the relationship between various statements that was previously obscured because they had been separated by editing. As an avid student of the Bible, I also appreciate Robert's footnotes identifying biblical references. I've been struck by how many of them there are, particularly in the first chapter (I have yet to get beyond Chapter 1 in my daily readings).

I've also been working through Chapters 21 and 22 with my study group, using the CE as my text for study. I've come to appreciate the way the original paragraph breaks from Helen's notes have been restored. It's surprising how, at times, the relation between various statements, and even the thread of a logical argument, can be obscured by something as seemingly innocuous as a misplaced paragraph or section break.

— Allen Watson

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My gratitude for these expanded teachings from Jesus is beyond words!

Having studied the Course for a couple of decades now, I'm thrilled to find that my motivation to extend and to accept miracles into my life has grown exponentially through study and practice of all the new miracle-principles material. At long last, these principles are now expanded and much better defined and explained. As a result, I've been able to understand first that I can actually give and receive miracles, and second that giving/receiving miracles is, in truth,

the only way out of fear, which I have personally experienced. My gratitude for these expanded teachings from Jesus is beyond words!

— Linda Snow

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I just seem to be getting more because I understand it better

I really enjoy reading the CE for a few reasons...

- because words that were left out are now included,
- because words that weren't in Helen's notes are left out,
- because there are footnotes that really help explain where Jesus is coming from when he channeled information to Helen,
- and because the cameos help explain the circumstances in Helen and Bill's lives when she received a specific part of the Course.

I just seem to be getting more because I understand it better.

— Robert Turrou

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I feel more open to having a *real* relationship with Jesus

I have always experienced the miracle principles and the early chapters as somewhat choppy and disjointed. The Complete and Annotated edition has helped me in seeing the connection between the different ideas. And it has flushed out the meaning of some passages that I had felt were kind of cryptic.

Reading the CE has deepened my understand of exactly what Jesus is telling me about miracles. It also has helped me in my relationship with Jesus. Through seeing how Jesus relates to Helen and Bill (in the cameos) I feel closer to him, and more open to having a *real* relationship with him.

— George Porter

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The material is pulling me toward a different way of life

I have been working on the Complete and Annotated Edition as an editor for many years, but with the book actually being out, I have put my editor role down and am having the pleasure of approaching the material as a student. I'm reading the Text every day with my wife, Nicola. We start the day by reading together and discussing that day's reading. And then after getting the kids off to school, I sit down and blog about my reflections on that day's reading. Nicola and I have just finished Chapter 1 and are starting on Chapter 2.

I know all this material, yet I find that this reading of the Text is proving to be a very personal journey. I experience the material as challenging the way I live on a very concrete level and pulling me toward a different way of life, one that is less egocentric and more centered on others. The effect the Text is having on me is something I didn't really expect. What's especially rewarding is that all of those features we included in order to help students (new material, original wording, footnotes, cameos, even the look and feel of the book) are having the intended effect *on me*.

— Robert Perry

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I have a much clearer picture of the miracle principles as the foundation for the Course

I've been following the daily reading calendar for 2017 and rereading the miracle principles quite often the past few weeks. With all of the original material in Chapter 1, I have a much clearer picture of the role these principles play in

laying the foundation for the Course.

Firstly, the principles portray the mindset that I as a student of the Course must adopt for living my life. For example, I was practicing Lesson 228 in Part II of the Workbook recently. When I read in the prayer, “I stand ready to receive Your Word alone for what I really am,” it immediately made me think of the statement in principle 46 where Jesus explains the passage from Matthew 24:44 about “holding myself ready” by being miracle-minded.

My mindset with understanding how Jesus sees his role with me is also more clear in this new edition. He tells us to “have a good day” (be devoted to miracles) and to call on him. He tells us to ask him for guidance and to avail ourselves of his efforts, that he will help me as much as I will let him.

Secondly, I see how these miracle principles are like premises and propositions that become proven as they are interwoven with the text (which is fitting for an educational course). For example, I was recently reading sections of Chapter 13 (“The Cloud of Guilt” and “Release from Guilt” in the FIP edition), and just in those two sections I saw several references to the Golden Rule and to the role of Atonement in dispelling darkness and fear, and statements on projection that are building on what was introduced in the miracle principles.

It is so much easier to understand the role the miracle principles have for my understanding the Course with this edition.

— Joe Baker

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The new material is so exciting; it’s like discovering a hidden treasure

I consider *A Course in Miracles* the word of God, and it has been my exclusive guide in life for eighteen years. Imagine my excitement in learning that a new edition has been published with a lot of new material, plus explanations and background information. I just received my copy of the Complete and Annotated Edition (CE), and I am thrilled that it is even better than I expected.

I find it easier to read the CE than other editions. The new material is so exciting; it’s like discovering a hidden treasure. The footnotes explain difficult passages that have previously puzzled me, and help me make connections with other sections of the Course. I particularly value the biblical references, many of which I overlooked before. I enjoy the cameos, not only because they are great stories, but also because they give the writing of the Course a context that helps me relate to Helen, Bill, and Jesus in a personal way that I never have before.

Going forward, the CE is the only version of the Course that I will be using.

— James Gregory

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This is really what I needed at this point of my spiritual path

While I love the FIP version and always will, the CE version feels more personal to me. I don’t know how, but I feel like the new material that is more personal between Jesus, Helen, and Bill is helping me develop a better relationship with Jesus myself. I feel closer to Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and this closeness is making me understand ACIM at a deeper level. This is really what I needed at this point of my spiritual path.

— Justin Chin

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Each chapter becomes more revealing than the last

On previous readings of the Course, I often did not understand a point being made on the page. I am sure I was not alone in that. But I soldiered on, hoping it would become clearer later on. But it rarely did. As I read each chapter, the concepts I had not fully understood grew like a snowball. And so, by Chapter 13 it became obvious that each missed point had built on successive points leading to quite a sizeable ball and then a full snowdrift, obscuring my understanding of the Course. I could sense that the Course was a masterpiece discussing profound ideas and illusion-reversing concepts. But I just couldn’t put it together.

With the Complete and Annotated Edition, it is now clear that Jesus expects us to get the earlier concepts so that he

can build on them to make even greater points later on. Now I can see that the Text builds into a majestic vision of an alternative way of looking at everything. With the restored original dictation of the CE, key concepts are explained by Jesus in very human terms—especially in the early chapters. Then it is easy to follow when Jesus builds on these foundations, thanks to the incredibly helpful footnotes. So my understanding of these critical concepts became richer and fuller than I could have hoped.

Now as I progress through the Text, each chapter becomes more revealing than the last. The sheer beauty of the prose, the ideas, and the love comes shining through when not obscured by my snowdrift of misunderstanding. And then a real revelation for me: to discover just how majestic the later chapters really are. I am particularly struck by the end chapters 28 to 31 which, when the earlier concepts are understood, must be contenders for the greatest spiritual writing of all time.

With the Complete and Annotated Edition, the Course is more accessible than ever before.

— Steve Clarke

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I cannot recommend the Circle's new Complete and Annotated Edition highly enough

The wonderful cameos you'll find in it would be enough to justify your purchase of the Circle of Atonement's new Complete and Annotated Edition of the Course all by themselves. They shed a wholly new light on what was going on for Helen and Bill while the Course was coming through. They're engaging, touching, absolutely fascinating. But the cameos are not only fascinating. Importantly, they are inspiring and deeply instructive too. In fact, they're just wonderful.

Oh, and I also need to mention the footnotes you'll find throughout this new edition. There are a lot of footnotes. Often, I'll be honest, my heart sinks when I see lots of footnotes in a text. They can feel like hard work a bit of a scholarly distraction. *But not here!* This is because the footnotes in the new CE are an incredibly practical aid to understanding. I thought I already knew the Course well, having been reading it for over twenty years. However, these footnotes are serving to deepen and enrich my understanding of every page. Frankly, now that I've discovered their value, I don't know how I ever managed without them.

For anyone who already loves the Course—or for anyone who's merely curious and who maybe simply wants to find out just a little bit more about this modern spiritual masterpiece—I cannot recommend the Circle's new Complete and Annotated Edition highly enough.

— Phil Brisk

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I have been astounded by how much the new material clarifies my understanding

I have only read as far in the new book as the Text reading schedule guides, so I am still on the first several cameos and the miracle principles in Chapter 1 of the Text. I have been astounded by how much the new material clarifies my understanding. The miracle principles have come to life in a whole new way with the additional material and explanation. In the past, some of the miracle principles seemed truncated or impenetrable, as if something was missing. This new book offers explanation and depth, providing for a much smoother flow and understanding. Footnotes and cameos are extremely helpful in providing examples and definition about how to apply the material to my life.

— Janet Chandler

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It's like experiencing the Course for the first time again

I've read the Text several times before. Even so, reading the new Complete and Annotated Edition is like experiencing the Course for the first time again. It's really sinking in in a powerful way that feels very personal to me. Every hard-to-understand passage has been beautifully explained, so it takes away the only frustrating part of reading the Course and makes way for holy instant after holy instant! The CE is such a gift. I highly recommend that you get your hands on this version if you want a more complete experience with the Course—and its author!

— Darcy Polito

I feel I am personally being taught by Jesus to become one of his active miracle workers

The new material in the Complete and Annotated Edition has increased my understanding, not only of the overall path, but of the crucial purpose of giving miracles to others. No longer do I think giving miracles is out of my reach; instead, they end up being ordinary “expressions of love” with far-reaching effects. As I read this edition, I feel I am personally being taught by Jesus to become one of his active miracle workers.

The cameos are priceless, and shine a light on Helen and Bill’s first attempts with the Course and with Jesus as their guide and teacher. Jesus addresses both of them with instruction that is geared specifically to their individual learning needs and has relevance to their daily lives, and he does it always with his steadfast goal in mind. I sense Jesus’ unwavering love, devotion, and patience in his leading them into a new world of understanding. His vantage point far exceeds the most gifted therapist in uncovering the motives and patterns of their minds and behavior so that they can fulfill their special function.

This added material not only helps me with my own walking of this path, but also helps me with those who seek me as a teacher in their own journey with the Course. I could go on and on, but each reader will discover for themselves the riches that await in this new edition. I have no doubt that Jesus had his hand in guiding Robert and all those involved in gifting me and the world with the Complete and Annotated Edition of *A Course in Miracles*. I am grateful for this incredible development in helping the Course “grow from infancy into a helper of the world.”

— Ken Froessel

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It has made the journey more grounded, more understandable, more doable, and more compelling

I knew from the first time I heard the words “A Course in Miracles” that I was supposed to do it. I already knew Jesus was my chosen teacher, and loving my brother was the highest truth I could imagine. The FIP version has taken me a long way. But the Circle’s Complete and Annotated Edition has made the journey more grounded, more understandable, more doable, and more compelling. Now I have Jesus in the newly included dictation telling me, in practical terms, through his guidance of two very different personalities (Helen and Bill), how to express that love, how to feel his love, and how to step into who we really are.

In this new edition, I can see the emphasis that is germane to Jesus’ message shining through the theology of the Course. Through the CE’s corrections of later edits that had diluted the message of love rooted in a loving reality, that message is now supported by words which bring a clearer theology. The Complete and Annotated Edition is blessed with editing inspired by years of study and devotion to total fidelity to what the Course is teaching. You owe yourself the opportunity of experiencing its vibrancy, and your increased motivation.

— Barb Hembling

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It has taken my understanding to new and deeper levels of insight I did not think possible

When I began reading the Complete and Annotated Edition, I was not sure what to expect. Surely the earlier editions were sufficient, even for the serious student, no? I quickly learnt otherwise. Here was the Course that had been revealed to Helen and Bill. A Course with practical examples taken from their everyday lives, of value to us all. Robert’s foot-notes were particularly useful in helping me unravel some of the more challenging passages. No excuse for passing over them now!

The Course we know and love is still there, but I found the new edition to be less formal. More importantly, however, there is a greater sense of the presence of Jesus in the words. It has taken my understanding to new and deeper levels of insight that I did not think possible.

— Mike Tolley

The overwhelming clarity makes for a completely different experience of reading the Course

I love the down-to-earth nature of the original dictation, aided by the amazing clarity of the footnotes; then there is the additional illumination of the cameo essays, and reading the Course is a totally different and immeasurably richer experience.

But it's not just a reading experience either, because if there is one thing that is coming across very loud and very clear, it is that Jesus wants miracle workers—ordinary people displaying the willingness to ask him what miracles they should perform today, and ask again, and follow the guidance they receive. I love the fact that Jesus refers to real people when he is giving examples of miracle workers, from Helen and Bill, to famous people, to Mrs. Albert! It drives home for me that in his eyes, we are all equally capable of giving miracles, we just need to be willing to listen, learn, and do.

I guess I would sum up by saying that the overwhelming clarity contained in the original dictation, the footnotes, and the cameo essays together makes for a completely different experience of reading the Course, along with the sense that he really means it when he says that we should be devoting each day to miracles.

— Nicola Perry