

SAMPLE PAGES

# The Rhythm and Reason of Reality

*Prose and Poetry in  
A Course In Miracles*

Compiled by  
Steve “Michael” Russell  
with a  
Preface by Ray Comeau, Ph.D



ENDEAVOR ACADEMY  
*Certum Est Quia Impossibile Est*

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*Prose and Poetry in A Course In Miracles*  
Compiled by Steve Russell

International Standard Book Number (ISBN-10): 1-890648-91-4  
(ISBN-13): 978-1-890648-91-6

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011940661

Published By:  
Endeavor Academy  
501 East Adams Street, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965, USA  
Phone: +1 608-253-1447  
[www.themasterteacher.tv](http://www.themasterteacher.tv)  
[www.endeavoracademy.com](http://www.endeavoracademy.com)  
Email: [publishing@endeavoracademy.com](mailto:publishing@endeavoracademy.com)

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks to Marty Preston and Judy Blue Eyes for encouraging me in this project, and to all who sat with me in the library while I pondered metric irregularities and replaced spaces with carriage returns

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## THE RHYTHM AND REASON OF REALITY

*A Course In Miracles* is a direct communication from God through Jesus Christ indicating the apparent conditional situation between God and man, which is one of false separation, and the manner in which that apparent schism is and was repaired. Its sole purpose is to bring enlightenment through the transformation of your mind.

### Facing Your Dilemma

Let's look at *A Course In Miracles* as an effect of supra-consciousness; that is, with Jesus Christ as its true Causation. The acceptance or admission that *A Course In Miracles* originated from an absolutely unearthly Source, while it appears simple, is the single most difficult barrier to enlightenment that the immature consciousness faces. No matter how overwhelmingly predominant the evidence, both in method of origination and in content, that this is indeed so, the assertion is finally, inevitably, an act of faith. You must remember that human conceptual consciousness is explicitly formulated in a self-perpetuating structure of thought that denies singularity. Nothing could be more devastating to the dualistic mind construct, that is, limited perceptual reality, than the realization that *A Course In Miracles* is indeed not of this world, but actually Truth speaking to falsity. In other words, God-man speaking to man!

*"This course has come from him because his words  
have reached you in a language you can love  
and understand."* (Manual For Teachers)

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## PREFACE

I have so much gratitude for Steve “Michael” Russell. With his musician’s ear, he heard the underlying rhythm running through the prose paragraphs of Jesus’ unworldly masterpiece, A Course in Miracles, and with his poetic sensibilities he saw the blank verse emerging from the prose of the Course.

As you can see in his Introduction, he saw the blank verse emerge from the prose, sporadically along the way in the early chapters of the Text, and in Chapters 26-31, the prose paragraphs morph entirely into poetic stanzas, and the same morphing occurs in the Workbook, Lessons 98-365.

While sitting at his computer in the early 90’s, reading the Course on his computer screen, he heard the rhythm in the lines, recognized the iambic pattern in the syllables of slack STRESS, slack STRESS, and realized the pattern of five sets of iambs per line. This is iambic pentameter, a poetic convention that appeared in the time of Shakespeare. To illustrate, I selected the first paragraph of Lesson 132, I loose the world from all I thought it was.

What KEEPS the WORLD in CHAINS but YOUR be LIEFS? And WHAT can SAVE the WORLD ex CEPT your SELF? be LIEF is POW er FUL in DEED. The THOUGHTS

And Russell counted, or more accurately, felt the rhythm, and after five sets of iambs, he hit the Enter Key, and the rest of the prose paragraph fell away.

What KEEPS the WORLD in CHAINS but YOUR be LIEFS?

And then again:

And WHAT can SAVE the WORLD ex CEPT your SELF?

And:

be LIEF is POW er FUL in DEED. The THOUGHTS

you HOLD are MIGHT y, AND il LU sions ARE

as STRONG in THEIR ef FECTS as IS the TRUTH.

a MAD man THINKS the WORLD he SEES is REAL,

and DOES not DOUBT it. NOR can HE be SWAYED

by QUES tion ING his THOUGHTS’ ef FECTS.

it IS but WHEN their SOURCE is RAISED to QUES tion THAT

the HOPES of FREE dom COMES to HIM at LAST.

And now a poetic stanza emerges from the prose paragraph, marching stately across the page.

To shift the metaphor from hearing to seeing, what he saw emerging from the prose paragraphs is like sitting in a movie theatre, watching the action on the screen, and then putting on your 3D glasses, and suddenly, you are viewing a panorama that was there all the time, only you could not perceive it without your glasses.

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The only reason I am writing this Preface is to take it one step further by demonstrating exactly how Jesus postures our voice by using a variety of poetic rhythms and techniques. Within the context of the basic iambic cadence, Jesus varies His rhythm to posture our voices to say the words exactly as He intended, while reading His words, either silently, or aloud. One way He realizes His intention is to employ the rhythmic metrics that have been used in English poetry for over four centuries.

You are already familiar with the iamb, slack STRESS: chris TINE

Here are four others:

1. Trochee, STRESS slack: RAY mond
2. Spondee, STRESS STRESS: CHRIS TINE (spoken by an irate mother)
3. Dactyl, STRESS slack slack: JON a than
4. Anapest, slack slack STRESS: ger trude STEIN

Here are illustrations of each, Lesson 340, I can be free of suffering today.

FA ther, I thank You for today, and for 1

the freedom I am certain it will bring.

THIS DAY is holy, for today YOUR SON 3

will be redeemed. His suffering is done.

For he will hear Your Voice directing him 5

to find CHRIST'S VIS ion through forgiveness, and

be free forever from all suffering.

THANKS for to/ DAY, my/ FA ther/ i was BORN

into this world but to achieve this day,

and what it holds in joy and freedom for 10

Your holy Son and for the world he made,

which is released along with him today.

Be glad today! Be glad! There is no room

for anything but joy and thanks today.

our FA/ ther HAS/ redeemed His Son this day.

Not one of us but will be saved today.

Not one who will remain in fear, and none

the father will not gather to Himself,

awake in Heaven in the Heart of Love.

Please notice that in your reading of this Lesson, your voice maintained a primarily iambic rhythm, only the underlined syllables indicate where your voice varied from the basic cadence, and in each variation, Jesus is posturing your voice to read those words with particular emphasis.

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In line 1, Jesus use the trochee, FA ther, emphasizing that God, the Father, is standing out from the other four sets of iambs.

In line 3, two spondees are used to emphasize THIS DAY and YOUR SON.

In line 6, the spondee /CHRIST VIS/ is used, making clear the result of forgiving the sights seen through the body's eyes that cause all our suffering.

In line 8, Jesus breaks away completely from the iambic pattern, using a dactyl, THANKS for to, and an anapest, i was BORN, framing two trochees, DAY my, and FA ther, indicating our gratitude for being born as His Son.

“OK. Enough of that,” you may be saying to yourself.

“You just used three sets of iambs,” I say.

“STOP IT!”

“Now, that's a . . .OK, I'll stop.”

Here is one more thing, very briefly. Jesus also utilizes the basic poetic techniques of sound to posture our voices, demonstrating how the sounds resonate in our ears, blending sound and sense. There are primarily three techniques:

1. Alliteration: the repetition of initial sounds.

The hush of heaven holds my heart today. (Lesson title, 286)

2. Consonance: the repetition of consonant sounds.

Here are the last two sentences of the same Lesson:

Today we will not doubt the end which God

Himself has promised us. We trust in Him,

and in ourself, who still is one with Him.

3. Assonance: the repetition of vowel sounds.

My heart is beating in the peace of God. (Lesson title, 267)

Here are the last two sentences of the same Lesson:

Father, my heart is beating in the peace

the Heart of Love created. It is there

and only there that I can be at home.

Finally, in His unworldly masterpiece Jesus is always posturing our voice by a perfect blend of sound and sense, rhythm and reason, whether we are reading His prose paragraphs, or His poetic stanzas. His singular intent is to lull us into a state of mind profoundly receptive to the Word of God.

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## INTRODUCTION

Those of you who have discovered the unearthly masterpiece, *A Course In Miracles*, will no doubt be aware of, and grateful for, its divine message of the remembrance of God and reality through love and forgiveness, that are only made possible in the realization that this world is a dream of your own making. You may remember reading, amongst the literature concerning the scribing of the *Course*, references to the use of the poetic form called *iambic pentameter*. Most of you won't know exactly what this means, some notwithstanding your own claims to the contrary. Of those who do know what the term means, most will not be able to easily discern the poetic form within the prosaic layout of the *Course*.

The purpose of this volume is to present the poetry of the *Course* in a totally accessible manner. You need know nothing about poetic forms and meters to begin enjoying it immediately. You may, however, wish to read this introduction, since the search to ascertain the extent of the poetic form within the *Course* has revealed another astounding dimension in its structural integrity.

Iambic pentameter is usually described as “lines consisting of five *iamb*s”, which in turn are described as “metric feet of two syllables each, the second syllable being the stronger”. Such a description is useful to few. Put simply, a line of iambic pentameter sounds like this:

*Da-dum da-dum da-dum da-dum da-dum.*

This form is also called “blank verse”, a more general term denoting even rhythm without rhyming. Because the *Course* is presented entirely as prose, the extent to which this form is used is a surprising and exciting discovery.

The Text of *A Course In Miracles* can be seen as three distinct parts, two of twelve chapters each, and the last of seven chapters, each differentiated from the other by the use of meter. Within this structure, a gradual transition is made from prose to blank verse. Normal spoken English and prose is arhythmic, having sometimes one, sometimes two syllables between accents. The first twelve chapters of the *Course* are written in such prose, and the portrait of the human condition given is prosaic indeed. The very last sentence of Chapter 12 is the first glimpse of what, metrically speaking, is to come: “Your *Father could not cease to love His Son.*”

The second part begins with the first seven sections of Chapter 13 becoming increasingly iambic ~ one syllable between accents ~ until in section seven, “The Attainment of the Real World,” each paragraph contains on average only three or four irregularities. This is the metric characteristic of the second twelve chapters. Frequently, paragraphs begin with emphatic statements of light reality, given in iambic pentameter. “There is a light that this world cannot give;” is the first such occurrence. “You do not really want the world you see;” “We cannot sing redemption’s hymn alone;” “Your faith in nothing is deceiving you.” These glorious statements are each elucidated conceptually in the paragraphs that follow from them, but each also offers an opportunity to enter into real communication. For instance, you could read “*You do not really want the world you see,*” and then read on to

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see what this means, or you could simply say: “Oh wow! That’s actually true!” and spring immediately into Heaven. You are being prepared for a new mode of data transmission.

Deeper into the second part, increasingly strong “insertions” of iambic pentameter occur; longer passages that persist further into the paragraphs. For instance, in Chapter 21:

*Thus they define their life and where they live,  
adjusting to it as they think they must,  
afraid to lose the little that they have.  
And so it is with all who see the body  
as all they have and all their brothers have.  
They try to reach each other, and they fail,  
and fail again.*

Coincident with the approach of total iambic pentameter, Jesus makes this statement (in Chapter 22): “*This is a crucial period in this course*, for here the separation of you and the ego must be made complete.” And this:

*This course will be believed entirely  
or not at all.  
For it is wholly true or wholly false,  
and cannot be but partially believed.*

Chapter 25 is the beginning of the final part. In Chapters 25 and 26 the final transition is made into perfect iambic pentameter, making feasible the presentation as poetry in the same manner as the works of Shakespeare are presented, with two columns of the short blank verse lines to a page. Encoded into the ongoing presentation of conceptual ideas is the true communication the *Course* aims to teach. Each line is a perfectly whole package of information. It is at this last part that this volume takes up the Text.

Some parts of these two chapters are still not regular enough to allow breakdown into lines, and so are presented as prose. Also, the regular iambic pentameter in these two chapters, and early in Chapter 27, often contains lines that have one extra syllable, or short lines of only four or six syllables. These discrepancies are used to emphasize ideas in the same manner that the single lines of iambic pentameter were used in the second part, only rather than lifting you into communication, they drop you out momentarily, the aim being to teach you to recognize the difference.

In the remaining chapters of the Text, the iambic pentameter is perfect. Jesus never abbreviates words to achieve this, but does make use of words with an adaptable syllable count: *Heaven* as one or two syllables, *idea* as two or three. Maintenance of the meter accounts for what frequently seemed to be unusual syntax - but which now makes perfect sense, read as poetry.

A transition from prose to poetry also occurs in the Workbook, but it is much simpler, and quicker. The first ninety lessons are plain prose, with the exception of Lesson 78, which is totally poetic. The transition occurs entirely within seven lessons. Lesson 91 is prose. The following lessons have increasing percentages of verse, but the distinction is kept very

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clear. Any paragraph will either be entirely prose, or entirely poetry, and within the poetry there are very few uneven or short lines. Lesson 98 is pure poetry, and it is astonishing to discover that *everything* in the *Workbook* from Lesson 98 on is in iambic pentameter ~ the introductions to Reviews, the “instructions on themes of special relevance,” such as *What is Forgiveness?*, the prayers and the Epilogue.

The Manual for Teachers and Clarification of Terms are post-production add-ons to *A Course In Miracles*, and refer to Jesus in the third person, indicating different authorship, actually a collaboration. They contain very few but very beautiful poetic passages, and these are also included here, as is a collection of iambic pentameter “zingers” from within the second part of the text.

Attempts to read the poetic form directly from the original prose layout often result in diminished comprehension. Conversely, the presentation as blank verse guarantees placing correct emphasis for understanding (though not understanding itself), and the elegance and eloquence of Jesus’ poetry, and the regular rhythmic lope, offer an expanded experience of the *Course* to the musical mind. The final and most exciting discovery of all is that whole communication occurs without the need to understand concepts at all.

The magnitude and beauty of the *Course*, simply as a work of literature and without regard to its miraculous content, adequately belie any notion of its human authorship. The divinity of the ideas expressed is beyond question. Certainly the poetic and prosaic forms contained in *A Course In Miracles* are there because that was necessary for the healing of God’s Son, since this is the Holy Spirit’s only purpose.

~ Michael Russell

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## PORTALS TO RHYTHMIC REALITY

### Iambic pentameter lead sentences from Chapters 13 thru 24

Your Father could not cease to love His Son.  
(Ch12.VIII)

There is a light that this world cannot give.  
(Ch13.VI)

Awaking unto Christ is following  
the laws of love of your free will, and out  
of quiet recognition of the truth  
in them.  
(Ch13.VI)

You do not really want the world you see...  
(Ch13.VII)

Christ is still there, although you know Him not.  
(Ch13.VII)

We cannot sing redemption's hymn alone.  
(Ch13.VII)

Determine, then, to be not as you were.  
(Ch13.X)

Now it is given you to heal and teach...  
(Ch13.X)

Release from guilt as you would be released.  
(Ch13.X)

Your faith in nothing is deceiving you.  
(Ch14.II)

The Holy Spirit asks of you but this...  
(Ch14.VII)

There is no substitute for truth. And truth  
will make this plain to you as you are brought  
into the place where you must meet with truth.  
(Ch14.VIII)

You have one test, as sure as God, by which  
to recognize if what you learned is true.  
(Ch14.XI)

You cannot be your guide to miracles,  
for it is you who made them necessary.  
(Ch14.XI)

Can you imagine what it means to have  
no cares, no worries, no anxieties,  
but merely to be perfectly calm  
and quiet all the time?  
(Ch15.I)

Think you that you can judge the Self of God?  
(Ch15.V)

The Holy Spirit cannot teach through fear.  
And how can He communicate with you,  
while you believe that to communicate  
is to make yourself alone?  
(Ch15.VII)

We who are one cannot give separately.  
(Ch15.X)

Fear not to recognize the whole idea  
of sacrifice as solely of your making.  
(Ch15.XI)

This is a course in how to know yourself.  
(Ch16.III)

Your bridge is builded stronger than you think...  
(Ch16.III)

Across the bridge it is so different(Ch16.VI)  
As God ascends into His rightful place  
and you to yours, you will experience  
again the meaning of relationship  
and know it to be true. Let us ascend  
in peace together to the Father,  
by giving Him ascendance in our minds.  
(Ch17.IV)

To substitute is to accept instead.  
(Ch18.I)

Let not the dream take hold to close your eyes.  
(Ch18.II)

What could God give but knowledge of Himself?  
(Ch18.VI)

What would you see without the fear of death?  
(Ch19.IV)

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The holy do not interfere with truth.  
(Ch20.III)

The blind become accustomed to their world  
by their adjustments to it.

They think they know their way about in it.  
(Ch21.I)

Thus they define their life and where they live,  
adjusting to it as they think they must,  
afraid to lose the little that they have.

And so it is with all who see the body  
as all they have and all their brothers have.  
They try to reach each other, and they fail,  
and fail again.

(Ch21.I)

I am responsible for what I see.  
I choose the feelings I experience,  
and I decide upon the goal I would achieve.  
And everything that seems to happen to me  
I ask for , and receive as I have asked.

(Ch21.II)

Begrudge not then this little offering.  
(Ch21.II)

Faith and belief and vision are the means  
by which the goal of holiness is reached.

(Ch21.III)

Where would the answer be but in the Source?  
(Ch21.V)

You *are* your brother's savior. He is yours.  
Reason speaks happily indeed of this.

This gracious plan was given love by Love.  
And what Love plans is like Itself in this:

Being united, It would have you learn  
what you must be. And being one with It,  
it must be given you

to give what It has given, and gives still.

Spend but an instant in the glad acceptance  
of what is given you to give your brother,  
and learn with him

what has been given both of you.

To give is no more blessed than to receive.

But neither is it less.

(Ch21.VI)

The Son of God is always blessed as one.  
(Ch21.VI)

Take pity on yourself, so long enslaved.  
(Ch22.IN)

This is a crucial period in this course,  
for here the separation of you and the ego must  
be made complete.

(Ch22.II)

This course will be believed entirely  
or not at all. For it is wholly true  
or wholly false,  
and cannot be but partially believed.

(Ch22.II)

The ego's whole continuance depends  
on its belief you cannot learn this course.

(Ch22.III)

These eyes, made not to see, will never see.  
(Ch22.III)

If you were one with God and recognized  
this oneness, you would know His power is yours.  
But you will not remember this while you  
believe attack of any kind means anything.

(Ch22.VI)

Nothing around you but is part of you.  
(Ch23.IN)

Be certain that it is impossible  
God and the ego, or yourself and it,  
will ever meet.

You seem to meet,

and make your strange alliances on grounds  
that have no meaning.

For your beliefs converge upon the body,  
the ego's chosen home, which you believe  
is yours.

(Ch23.I)

What *you* remember *is* a part of you.

For you must be as God created you.

Truth does not fight against illusions,  
nor do illusions fight against the truth.

Illusions battle only with themselves.

Being fragmented, they fragment. But truth

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is indivisible, and far beyond  
their little reach. You will remember what  
you know when you have learned you cannot be  
in conflict. One illusion about yourself  
can battle with another, yet the war  
of two illusions is a state  
where nothing happens. There is  
no victor and there is no victory.  
And truth stands radiant, apart from conflict,  
untouched and quiet in the peace of God.  
(Ch23.I)

The “laws” of chaos can be brought to light,  
though never understood. Chaotic laws  
are hardly meaningful, and therefore out  
of reason’s sphere. Yet they appear to be  
an obstacle to reason and to truth.  
(Ch23.II)

How can some forms of murder not mean death?  
Can an attack in any form be love?  
What form of condemnation is a blessing?  
Who makes his savior powerless  
and finds salvation?  
(Ch23.II)

Where God created life, there life must be.  
(Ch23.II)

To learn this course requires willingness  
to question every value that you hold.  
Not one can be kept hidden and obscure  
but it will jeopardize your learning.  
No belief is neutral.  
(Ch24.IN)

You have come far along the way of truth;  
too far to falter now. Just one step more,  
and every vestige of the fear of God  
will melt away in love.  
(Ch24.II)

Here is your savior *from* your specialness.  
He is in need of your acceptance of  
himself as part of you, as you for his.  
(Ch24.II)

Forgiveness is the end of specialness.  
(Ch24.III)

Without foundation nothing is secure.  
(Ch24.III)

Forgive the great Creator of the universe,  
the Source of life, of love and holiness,  
the perfect Father of a perfect Son,  
for your illusions of your specialness.  
(Ch24.III)

The slaves of specialness will yet be free.  
Such is the Will of God and of His Son.  
(Ch24.III)

Rejoice you have no eyes with which to see;  
no ears to listen, and no hands to hold  
nor feet to guide. Be glad that only Christ  
can lend you His, while you have need of them.  
(Ch24.V)

The Father keeps what He created safe.  
(Ch24.VII)