

A Curse Explained

A talk by Vernon Howard given on 03-24-84 AM, Side 1

I will read a question aloud. "I hope my question isn't a strange one, but I've wanted to ask it for a long time. I'd like to know if there really is such a thing as a person being under a curse? What is a curse and what is it all about?"

The answer is as follows. All of you feel under a curse, so that's a perfectly normal question. You may not call it by that word. You may not call it being under a curse or under an evil spell, but in one way or another, with one description or another, you feel that you're under the curse of an unhappy life, of some dark, mysterious, hostile forces that you don't understand – that you're under their power.

Or you feel you're under the curse of the past, of an unhappy childhood. Or you're under the curse of a fixed future, that is, you feel yourself being driven somewhere with no power to stop it.

So the question is just fine. People do feel that they're under the power of a curse. Now let's first of all see what we mean by a curse. First of all, you can forget gypsies and evil witches casting a spell on someone else.

A curse cannot be transferred from one human being to another. Keep that as very very basic information. No witch or gypsy can put an evil spell on you and cause you to go wrong.

We might stop right now for a simple definition of what we mean by a curse. A curse is an invisible, silent, evil wish of one person to cause harm to another person. An evil wish for something bad to happen to him or her. Now forget again all about witches and gypsies. That has no validity at all.

If a witch comes along and says, "I curse you," and you feel like you're cursed, then you created it yourself. The gypsy hasn't done it at all. The witch hasn't done it. There is no such thing – get it final and get it solid, as any other human being putting you under an evil spell. It cannot happen! You can create it yourself through the power of your own self-suggestion. But no one, no human has power to hurt another human being in any way psychologically.

So now you know the basic principles of it. A curse cannot be transferred. So what is it? Now we know, we can find out what it means to be under a curse and it's so simple! And when I tell you what it is, you'll nod your head. You'll understand it somewhat. The only curse there is or ever can be is that of self-ignorance. That's it!

Ignorance of what? Well, you know what. Ignorance of what you're doing here. Ignorance of higher laws. Ignorance – ah, ignorance of where you are malfunctioning inwardly than a refusal to let that be changed. A refusal of the inner transformation of your life – that's self-ignorance, and that's a curse.

Put yourself at complete ease about whether you call it a curse from someone else or you might call it a feeling of emptiness, a feeling of pressure. There is something therefore, that can be done about your feeling under an evil spell and that something is called "Self Wisdom". You can do something about *any* wrong feeling. Did you hear what I just said? You can do something to erase *any* uncomfortable feeling. Including that of feeling that you've been left out and cheated or whatever you call a curse on your life.

Oh, yes. Let me emphasize a point. A person – you can't be cursed by anyone else, but you can be left with a curse. As a matter of fact, too bad that everyone – everyone is under the curse of self-ignorance, and they remain with that because of your refusal to go against it with the authority and the power that has been provided to you and is being provided to you at this very moment.

If you don't like the burdens and the confusions that go on in your life and in your mind, if you don't like those, then you've been given the healing teachings here and all you have to do is follow them.

I want to give you an example of how a person remains under the false power of the curse of dark life, and I'll put you into the story.

Suppose you have a friend who is not feeling well. He is sick, physically sick. And you're walking down the street and you meet him. And you say hello and he says hello to you and you talk a little bit. And you ask him how he feels. And he says, "Oh, I'm getting better. I'm feeling better than I did yesterday." And you say, "Well, how do you know that?" And he says, "Well, the doctor said so. The doctor said that I'm getting better." And already – please try to see the point I'm getting at – already you're suspicious. Because he said that someone *else* said that he is getting better. Someone else, something outside of him said he is getting healthier. No go! When you're getting healthier you know it from yourself, do you not? You must know it from yourself.

So, next day you meet him again and you ask him, "How are you doing?" And he says, "I'm getting better." You meet him a week latter. "How you doing?"

"Oh, fine. Doctor says I'm getting much better." And each time he says that, each time he says it, you know that he is lying. You see it plainly enough. He's shaking, his color is not quite healthy and right. And the expression on his face tells about the illness that's inside and expressing itself outwardly.

You know that there is a gigantic gap between what he tells you and how he looks. And you also know, if you have some intelligence about human ways, that he doesn't himself know the difference between what he says and the way he appears to other people. You know that he is completely unconscious of his divided state.

Let's go into that a little bit, then we'll go on with the story. To become reconciled with Trueness, with God there is only one way– one way – to go about it! There're not two. There're not fifty. That one way is for you to be

jolted and thrown into a new kind of confusion – a new kind of confusion – by seeing that you say and think one thing about yourself, and the inner nature and your body says something else.

When you're whole, when you're healthy, really healthy, that means everything about you is healthy. The mind can't be healthy and the emotions be sick. That's a contradiction, that's division. There is the gap.

We now – we're coming close, in fact we're right upon one method by which you can remove the curse of self-ignorance and be free of it and be healed. Which is for you to know when you say something about yourself that isn't the Truth. When you see yourself simply mixed up about life. If you're mixed up about anything in life, in sex. How many of you have sex problems? You know, I'm talking about mental or emotional – anywhere. Sex mixes you up, doesn't it? More you men right now than you ladies. More of you men because you're the aggressors. You go ahead of the woman, and you try to get the woman. The woman is passive. Women do not have the sexual problems, by the way, that men do.

You're mixed up about that and in a thousand little self-tormenting ways. And if you can see, if you were to isolate that one area alone, look at it gentlemen and ladies too. Sure, because you're connected with it. You're also connected with sex. Look at it alone and simply – you can reduce it very simply. You can say – start, always start at the start. Say, "Sex is a problem with me." And you can fill in the details. You're always thinking about it, gentlemen. You'd like to have that girl, but you know you never will. Now you're – now you're frustrated.

Oh, yes. A lot of guilt about it. A lot of guilt of past sexual behavior that was that was foolish and indiscreet, to put it mildly. Ah, a hope that somehow this is a wrong thought but you've got it, a hope that somehow a sexual experience will deliver you from yourself. Forget it. That's just another dream under the life of being cursed by ignorance.

I'm asking you, as a part of your liberation from the heaviness of the curse that is on your life to isolate this one area alone and see how you don't control it, but it controls you.

Oh, and when you're controlled by something, that means it can throw you, toss you anywhere it wants, anytime it wants.

Gentlemen, you're looking across the room, or you're sitting in the cafe and there is that pretty girl over there. Because you are under the curse of the self-ignorance you are gone.

See, the curse is painful, isn't it? And you're under the torment of seeing that girl, not knowing that you're under this spell, by the way. This evil magic spell. And wanting her and lusting after her sexually knowing that you're not going to have her, and that is your pain.

You see this – this is false life that you don't see as false life. I've told you many times it is better to be free than to be chained. *It is so nice not to be under the power of everything you see with your eyes!* It's so marvelous to be able to be in this physical visible world and not say, "I want!" Or not say,

"How can I protect myself against that person or circumstance?" But to see it visually and not let that visual sight of the circumstance, or the auto accident, or the woman, or the man, to see that without the visual wrongly going into the mechanical negative emotional and mental, without it going into that and keeping you under the curse of self-ignorance.

Lifting the curse and being healed and whole means then that you, your new nature jumps in immediately after you sight something. Something that you would call either negative or positive, attractive or repulsive, immediately after the physical vision of looking around whether down the street or on television or in the home. You jumping in, in a matter of speaking, you jumping in and letting reality tell you to do with that sight so you don't fall under your own curse of ignorance. And what reality will tell you to do is to do nothing! If you do anything, like lust after that girl, you've created the problem, the evil spell. You have therefore put yourself under the curse.

Reality says, "You can look with your physical eyes or hear something with your physical ears. You can do that and then you must allow me," – reality speaking – "you must allow me to do the rest for you!" But you don't want that. You still are so sure, as I spoke to you recently, you're so certain that you must guide your own life, guide your own reactions, you must handle that exterior situation as you have always handled it according to past experiences. But if you do that, then you'll only get the same results that you've always had. And that means – that means you won't use life as a teacher to become new every moment.

Everything you sight with your visual physical eyes is an opportunity for you to wake up, to lift the curse, to become new, to get rid of the junk, to throw – throw out the arrogance, for example, that you have. The arrogance that says, "I know what to do when sighting that pretty girl or that nice looking man."

You have got to stop saying to yourself with the false instructions, "I know what to do." You really don't know what to do that is right for you. And the evidence of that is overwhelming enough! If you can be on a higher level where you are not going to try to think your way out, think your way through, but you're going to relax and let something that is not thought come to you and tell you what to do. And it will tell you just the one thing, as I just said. It will tell you to do nothing.

It is either your action or the action of self-awareness – one or the other. If you choose your mind, if you choose your path, if you choose your false pleasure of lusting after that pretty girl, or demanding that man, if you choose that, then you have to pay for it! But you like paying for it! You do!

As a matter of fact, I hope you can follow this. In fact, you love to pay the price in a reaction of torment that you're not going to have that women, or of envy over someone who has a lot more money than you have. Or great sorrow over the fact that someone is twenty years younger than you. You're not young anymore. You love those reactions!

We're here to know that there is something different for you to learn to

love. The question therefore is, will you fall out of love first? Will you fall out of love with your division, like the man on the street. Remember your friend coming down the street and lying and saying that he was well? If you feel – if you feel, really feel well in your right feelings then you are well. You can't – you can't call yourself well just by saying you are with your feelings, your inner life telling you the opposite.

Lets go back to our man on the street a little bit. You meet him ten or twelve times and every time he pathetically lies to you. Finally, because he is your friend, you meet one day and you say, "Let's go sit on the park bench for a minute. You got fifteen minutes, friend?" Yeah, he always has fifteen minutes. He doesn't know what to do with himself. He's got a week, he's got a month, he doesn't know what to do with himself. Have you ever noticed you – you've got plenty of time? You don't know what to do!

By the way, when you grow internally, spiritually your time – your time in a very – very different kind of a way becomes far more valuable to you. You are wasting your time now but you don't know it. Therefore when you recover yourself inwardly, your time becomes so valuable because you see how much work you have to do! And you're so excited that you have – ah, that you have really profitable work to do.

So you and your friend sit on the park bench and you sit there casually. Nothing strained between you. Quite relaxed. And you just ask him, "Friend, can't you see that you are different from what you claim to be?" And maybe – maybe he will reach the breaking down point. What a marvelous day when you reach that, where he couldn't lie anymore, where he couldn't fake it anymore, when he couldn't bluff. When he ran out of things to say. And here is your friend. Here he is, fifty years old. You've known him since you were boys. You went to high-school together and graduated together. Here is this fifty year-old man, you're seated on the park bench with him. You're a spiritual student, this is why you can do this, you see. And you say, "Can't you see the difference between what you say and the way you really feel? Good friend, you don't have to lie to yourself, and you don't have to lie to me any more. He breaks down, sobs. Isn't that the greatest experience that could ever happen to him?"

I want to ask you and I'm talking to you now. How long are you going to take before it happens to you? Ah, no. You break down unknowingly, don't you? The pain, but you don't see the pain. You don't study. You don't see what's behind it.

God can only help a human being who *completely* breaks down. Where there's nothing – where there's nothing left to do but to sit there at the park bench shattered, no more inner argument, no more words of pretense. Where you have – where you have nothing but a shattered hulk of yourself. In that state, that man can now arise from where he is and work on himself to free himself of the curse that has punished and tormented him for fifty years.

You have no time to waste before – any longer – before you reach this truly spiritual experience for yourself. It cannot – listen. You listen carefully,

all of you. This experience of being so broken down that only God can pick you up. You can't pick yourself up anymore. This experience can only happen to you when you have no more fight in you. You have no more attack, you have – you have no more energy left, you're – you're worn out. All your artificial use of energies has been worn out.

And you wonder as you're seated – now, you put yourself in that man's place. You wonder what's going to happen to you. Very – I must tell you, few people ever reach this stage. Which is why I urge you to do your lessons well so you reach it sooner rather than later. Don't waste any more time before you go through the authentic – not the fake. The world is filled with religious fakers who are very very evil and very dangerous. You are working here to become innocent instead of dangerous. Make it very soon.

So you sit on the park bench, and it might be at home. It could be anywhere where you are at the moment, were all of a sudden a great crisis comes to you inwardly. All the woes and the pressures all seem to come on you all at once. But at that, oh, that marvelous moment you do nothing! You're too tired, you're too worn out. You're too worn out to even figure out what will happen to you as result of collapsing completely.

Before this real spiritual experience your imagination was pretty active. And your destructive self-interest was very energetic. And when previous crisis came to you these false energies and escapes overwhelmed you and you started to follow the false path. You became excited in your imagination over the fact that "This too will pass." That's a familiar phrase.

"Oh, I'm depressed now and everything pushes down on me and I have no hope and no help. Everything pushes down on me." And then sneaky evil memory coming out of conceit sneaks in, and you think a so-called religious thought, that tomorrow is going to be better. Or you – you think an entertainment thought. That when you go to the ball game, or you watch your favorite program on TV that will give you relief.

Ah, now listen. When you collapse on that park bench – you know what the word "collapse" means? It means the whole entire collapse of your haunted house. The whole business. You can't reserve one room in it.

You see, you're going to have to work long and hard to get this, might as well get it right now. It is one hundred percent collapse or none. A ninety-nine percent spiritual human being, by the way, which you are years away from even thinking about. A ninety-nine percent spiritual human being has not found God. It is one hundred percent or nothing.

I want that thought to go through your mind so that it will knock out your sneaky little beliefs that you can compromise. That there is such a thing as a little spirituality. There really is not.

What there is, and I'll explain it to you as best as words can explain this. If you have a hundred parts in you, ninety-nine parts can be false, one part can be true, but that one part that is true is one hundred percent true. Now you have to find a second part that is one hundred percent true and the next one and on and on until – until you are a hundred percent true. Which

means you don't longer exist like you did before. That something is now living your life for you.

Go through this experience and when you get up from the park bench, you will get up with an entirely different consciousness of yourself and of where you're going and what you're suppose to be doing here in your physical body. And you'll know what you're suppose to be doing. You're supposed to be – your supposed to be surrendering everything you have to God. That's it!

Look how simple that exercise is, to remember as best you understand what it means. And God knows you don't understand it, but that's alright, He understands. To surrender everything to God, which will not only help you understand what surrender to God means, but help you to understand that what you have to surrender and give up is all the incredible lies and evil ideas that you have. Simply give them up.

If you want to know what is better than exciting self-torment, give up exciting self-torment toward seeing that girl, or seeing the millionaire, toward seeing the house that you want. If you want to know what the alternative is to hell, give up voluntarily the hell that you now live in and heaven will reveal itself to you.

You have your part and it's part of your work to understand what your part is. And you forget that surrender means – and I'll say this in different ways – surrender means to know that you really have nothing to surrender to begin with. Because you're really surrendering the illusory self which since it is nothing, there is nothing to surrender, but seeing that you have nothing real to surrender is surrender!

Giving up all false beliefs about yourself. Giving up all your flattering labels. Giving that up means simply to give up the false life. Give up the false life and stay on that park bench shaking all you want, worried all you want, in great turmoil inwardly all you want, but if you stay there, it will come to you that this is the greatest single moment and experience of your life, and the greatest moment that any human being could ever find.

Because when you get up from there you are not trying to think your life out anymore, you're not trying to feel it out, you're not trying to imagine it out, all that has been set aside. And there is in its place a very quiet knowing and that knowing guides you right in this physical world. You'll know how to behave in this physical world. You'll know how to behave in this crazy world and you won't be affected by it.

All that we talked about, is talking about you lifting the curse from yourself. And when there is no more curse there is a healthy – oh yes – a healthy and a happy human being who really knows – who really knows – for the first time what happiness is! Happiness is to walk with Truth.

Take a Break.