

You Are Saved By Realizing That There Is No Self To Be Saved

A talk by Vernon Howard given on 11-28-85

You are saved by realizing that there is no self to be saved. Now there it is. You are saved by realizing that there is no self *needing* to be saved. Now look at what you can cut out of your life – every action, every frantic thought, every chasing around to try to make yourself feel good. You can cut that out altogether because they are the wrong things to do. Each time you try to save yourself from boredom or loneliness or envy, you keep yourself convinced that there is someone there to be saved!

Cut the whole business off! Start your spiritual and mental – your whole life all over right now. Throw everything out, all the trash, all the beliefs, all the anxieties, all the little needs to impress. Toss them out and dare to take one boat only for the journey across the ocean to the bright land over there.

That boat being the true idea that you don't have anything at all needing to be saved. You just think so. So why are you going to try to save a rambling wreck anymore? – from any college. (Laughter) Because you are quite sure in your delusion that you have to save yourself.

Now I want you – I want you to think as you've never thought and pondered before, this opening sentence I gave you. I am not going to let you get away with shoving it off into a corner for later consideration. You will do it now and later.

Lets start all over. You are quite convinced in your emotional life and in your false intellectual ramblings, you are quite sure that there is something that you have to accomplish, there is something you have to do, to attain, to prove, to increase a value. This is wrong! You don't have to do anything but realize that you're doing something useless.

You are not going to yield easily to what I told you, and that's a part of the help you are getting to realize that you don't want to realize. The fear of running out of yourself, of being empty, of having no place to go, that fear is so enormous that you live in it as your protector instead of as the enemy which it is.

Not knowing, never having experienced anything outside of you, you insist that you, your anxieties, your rambling is all there is. I tell you that it is not all there is. I am telling you that with the boating of self-discovery on that ocean voyage, I tell you that there is another land over there. Now I know this as a personal fact. Me knowing it as a personal fact, I can describe the voyage to you, what you must do. I can tell you about the island itself, that there are no wild animals to attack you there. There is no fear and loneliness or isolation on that other land. I can tell you about it, but you have to make the decision yourself to start sailing away from yourself.

How do you start? I want you to start right now. I want you all, while I'm talking, to describe yourself to yourself as you are at this very moment. You can do it. You can do it and still listen to me. I want you to do it. I want you to describe the wasteland with all its various beasts and ghosts and demons and hauntings. I want you to confront it bluntly, fully, so that something in you shuts up!

So that the blabbermouth, the phony neurotic, the phony, flamboyant human being inside of you shuts up because it can no longer talk in the face of the awfulness it has discovered inwardly. And you will shut up. You will stop this nonsensical blabbing and you'll look in stunned awe at it. Thank God that a human being has the opportunity to run out of words. And when you run out of words that's the same thing as running out of intellectual, phony pursuits of trying to find yourself.

And that's part of the voyage. And that means that you can keep going. You can go as fast as you want, by the way. Want to go faster than you are? All you have to do is perform the exercise I just gave you. Perform it say fifty times a day at a minimum.

I am going to describe myself to myself right now as I am cooking and I'm cleaning the house or I'm doing that bit of yard work out there. I'm going to describe myself to myself until I see that I've never ever had any self-acquaintance at all – not really! Because I was too close to myself to be able to see myself. I was it! I was the whole business. There was no student, no spiritual student there examining what was going on inside. I was the whole business.

And oh, how the blabbermouthery can go on. How easy to criticize, how easy to become a big phony and be impressive to other people and explain other things to them.

I told you yesterday and I'll tell you again because it's another valuable exercise you should be working on all day long and all night long too. I want you to put a special place in the corner of your mind for this. When you're talking with anyone and you don't have to be giving a speech before ten million people, you can be just talking to your spouse, talking with fellow workers, strangers. I want you to practice the first exercise of describing yourself to yourself while you're talking, until you suddenly slow down in your speech because you actually saw that you were lying.

I am not saying necessarily lying about the facts of a particular situation. I am talking about you lying by pretending to be someone who was an authority, someone who knew what he was talking about, someone who let loose with the mechanical flow of blabbermouthery simply because it's the easy thing to do – maybe to say something and thereby get rid of the other person.

You're always seeking the easy way out which is what mechanicalness really is. Your mechanical life never demands anything from you – not a thing – that's why you love it. You can just sit back and never notice how deceitful you are, how you are so compelled to go up and talk with someone because you don't know what to do with yourself. And so you extend your inner boredom onto them, and he or

she passes it back to you.

Now this is what you have to see. You have to see that you believe in yourself – falsely – but have no insight into the fact that you believe in yourself falsely, therefore nothing can jolt you into shutting up, shutting up your feelings, your moods!

An exploding volcano doesn't know that it's an exploding volcano. As it destroys itself and destroys everyone in the villages around it, it destroys without knowing its self-destruction or other destruction. You don't know you're destroying yourself because you believe in yourself.

You believe that it is necessary for you to take natural energy, the energy of the cosmic whole, you believe that you have to take this energy that has been given to you and that you can call up, you believe you have to take it to construct something. So you construct a junkyard, and a shack in the middle of that junkyard.

Now I want you to substitute something. Instead of construction, which is really destruction, because you're constructing a greater junkyard – instead of construction, think of realization. The energy can be re-channeled.

Your mind has certain mental powers, doesn't it? The power to understand certain things, to ponder. Your mind has certain energies – all squandered. All squandered in worrying about yourself. And that worry has become a fixed habit, and you won't let that be taken away from you. But you worry about yourself so that you can then add a thought, after the worry, in saying, "See, I am active in being concerned for my welfare." And that gives you false support and it gives you false confidence and it also gives you time to think of the next squandering of your energy, so that all you really do are things pointless and useless.

You have nothing to do about yourself, you really need to do nothing about yourself except to realize that there is no self that you have to work on, that you have to improve. "I've got to find a way to make a better impression on people. I've got to find a way to feel more secure. Maybe religion will do it or maybe the alcohol will do it or maybe getting a higher education will do it." And you'll get your long list of it and you never ever, unfortunately, come to an end to the quest because you never come to an end of the self.

You can't – you can't achieve success in any way for yourself. There is no way you can ever find God. It's impossible for you to have security, to have peace of mind, to have power, to be at rest. It is impossible for you to have anything good at all, because there is no one there to experience God and morality and happiness. You can't experience happiness. All you can do is feel the blows and the hurts of false happiness which comes in the retention of the belief in you.

The finding of God, of reaching the other land is a state. Finding happiness is a state that doesn't know you at all as you falsely know yourself. Now you'd better think about that. God himself, who is the only source of wisdom, real power, of contentment, of living outside of time, God does not at all know you as you know yourself.

Why don't you adopt God's viewpoint and abandon your own? Why don't you go to work to see the pointlessness of you going the way you are going to get whatever you think you have to get? You – you can't get anything because there is no grabber there – not really! You don't have a basket at all to carry around, to fill it with what you call good things which are the objects of your neurotic desire. You don't have a basket to carry around because there is no basket-carrier! But you insist there is. You create you. You create the basket, you create the good things you are going to get and nothing happens, nothing changes.

The only thing that continues is the frantic search, the weary search which includes looking out suspiciously, neurotically around at other people, and hopefully and also with great fear – hope and fear go together – looking out at the other person or the situation and saying, "Maybe that will do it."

Please stop talking. Please stop making self-deceitful statements like that. "Maybe that will do it." Go and be empty of everything that refers to you! Do that by realizing that there is no you there, therefore nothing to get, no action to take. You can relax right now if you want and let yourself go. And when you let yourself go, God will catch you, and not until then.

You know there is only one God, one real God, and there are a million false gods, and that's what you're chasing. And all the time you're doing this, you have a certain doubt, of course you do, a certain fearful doubt about the efficacy of what you're doing. You feel – you feel, "I've got to go somewhere but I don't know where. I've got to grab something, but I don't know what it is. I've got to hang on to something, but I don't know what it is to hang on to."

I want you to give an enormous shock to the satanic forces that are speaking in your name when you say things like that – that you have to get something. I want you to go psychologically and even physically when you're at home, just sit down on the couch and go limp and never again try to save yourself.

Here is a boy, just a little young boy, maybe eight or ten – something like that. And it's Saturday morning and he doesn't know what to do with himself. So he looks around for a game to play or something to keep him amused and he doesn't see any game or any plaything that he wants to play with, any toy, so he decides to invent his own game.

So he thinks about it a little bit and he is a little bit creative in the mechanical world, so he gets a bunch of boxes and puts them out on the ground and gets a handful of marbles, and he invents his own game of throwing the marbles to see if he can get them into the boxes on the ground. The further the box away, the more points he gets, right? One point for a close box, three for the next one, five points. Fun. He had fun with himself. It's his game so far, right? He created it. Fine. It's his game. He made the rules out of himself. Then something happens. I know you are following.

Some boyfriends come along. Oh, some girls too. (Laughter) Women, you want to get in it? You're in it now.

I read something kind of interesting the other day. Let's see, what was it? It said

that women now demand that God be female too, but you don't hear one peep out of them in saying that Satan is female too. (Laughter) Pretty good. (Laughter)

Okay, the bullies come along. They're a little taller, a little older. And isn't it interesting that even as children, if you're a little bit bigger already you've got power – bully power. And you bully your little brother, little sister. And so the so-called friends came along and they wanted to get in on the game. They thought that was kind of fun throwing the marbles. "Hey, I got five points! Hey, I got three points. Oh, I missed altogether."

It's all right. No matter what you say, as long as you're talking about yourself you're having fun. No fun. And they took over the game. They changed the rules. They said, "Well, we don't like it that way. We want to have six boxes out there, not four. You change that."

So because he was weak and they were three inches taller than him and two years older, he let them change the game. Pretty soon it wasn't fun for him anymore, was it? They were making the rules. They were telling him what to do. What's the point?

Oh, don't you know, don't you know – oh, I'll change the word. Don't you suspect that you're not playing your game anymore, that someone, something has taken it over? Of course.

Well, the evidence is right there. It's no fun anymore. Never was, as a matter of fact. You just – you just thought that it was going to be fun when you scored a hundred points and beat everyone else in the game, then you thought that that would give you the thrillism, then you'd feel like somebody. "I won the game."

Wherever there is an "I" there is a game, and you lose every time. You increase that hidden self-doubt that you have about yourself. You increase it a hundred percent so that you understand that the doubt is your present condition. Instead of phony beliefs in conquest, instead believing that those other boys are your friends. They not your – no other human being can be your friend. They want to take over. They want to dominate you.

How about that. Now I am not talking about the domination of the boss over you where you work. That's a different matter. That's purely intellectual. It's the boss – he tells you what to do because he's the boss. I am not talking about that. At the same time the boss might have false psychological bossiness over you, taking your game away from you because you're a weakling, because you're not strong all the time.

Oh, let me tell you something. Let's think of the worst possible condition we can describe, okay? The kingdom of hell with all its tyranny, with all the brutes and the thugs down there whipping other people, forcing them to throw coals on the fire, working without coffee breaks – hot coffee breaks. (Laughter) And you are a visitor to hell, not a permanent resident – not anymore. You escaped. And you go down there and they try to dominate you. They don't know that you are an escapee. You look just like any other resident down there. And they start to dominate you and thrash you with the whips and poke you with the pitchforks and

put you to work.

How would you like to be a happy human being? I'll tell you what happiness consists of – ignoring the hell that thinks it knows you and can dominate you. When God – when you allow God to know you, then you know yourself, and this knowledge of yourself allows you to work for the boss, to be in that family situation, to be a part of society and be marvelously and one hundred percent at liberty from their attempts to take your life away from you.

You're at liberty because you understood and worked on what I started the talk with – that you don't need to save yourself. You don't need to gain anything, you just need to lose something, which was just the delusion that there is a person there who needs to be saved through acquisition.

When the mind operates properly it does not invent *you*, therefore it does not invent stupid and foolish things for you to run around to try to accomplish. Truth is a total, final, lasting accomplishment. It's all done! That's why you can walk around the hell of this world and see the fires, see those human devils which are packed out there, aren't they? Wow.

You can see them, but you escaped your delusion of being a self who had to fight devils, so you don't fight. There is no fighter, there is no one to be offended, insulted. There is no one who has to defend himself. There is no one who has to go into worry and anxiety over anything that anyone else can do against you.

There is a big field, and surrounding on the circle of this big field are human monsters with rocks and swords and clubs and arrows and guns. And they're all – in their hatred and violence and their trickiness and especially their deceit – they are all your so-called friends around there. All your friends are out there. Five hundred of them. They've got all these weapons and they are firing toward the center of the field. "Blast, bang, zow, zappy." (Laughter) The thunder of the blunderbusses. That's an old-fashioned gun, I think. A rifle, isn't it? "Crash, boom, bang!" toward the center of the field.

You're ten miles off on top of a mountain with binoculars looking at them stupidly firing at the center of the field. They in their delusion think that you are there, but you in your non-illusion are not there at all, so they can't hit you and hurt you – you're up there.

Oh, don't be lonely for your enemies – because you are! In and out, you're lonely. You know what puts people in the center of the circular firing squad? I am telling you. This is a fact. A man or a woman puts himself in there and he looks around at the circle of guns and swords ready to blast him. Oh, he is so excited, so happy. "How marvelous! I am the center of the world.

Oh, so they got some new Colts, rifles, handguns to shoot at me. Ah! I can be afraid of those guns and those scowling people. Oh, I'm so grateful that I can be terrorized. Because I am in the center of this storm of artillery – I am in the center of it and I exist! Go ahead, blast me all you want! I don't care. I'm real. I exist!" And they blast! And he loses the opportunity to see that he wasn't who he thought he was.

He loses the opportunity by staying there. He loses the opportunity he could have had to escape that hell. He loses the opportunity that God was offering to him all along to get outside of that circle and be on top of the mountain looking down at the madness instead of being a part of it.

Now I want you to know that you – you love being in the center of that awful circle of murderers guns. Yes you do, because you believe in yourself. When you no longer believe in yourself according to your delusory concepts, when you disappear from yourself as a separate person, when you disappear to yourself, that's what puts you on the mountain. And that's what it means to have the protection of God.

Now there are lots of spiritual books that talk about how nothing shall harm you anymore and how free and happy you'll be. Nothing shall dismay you. That's what it's talking about in its higher sense. If you're not there, the whole world can blast you, but you're not there to get blasted.

You don't need to save yourself from yourself, you need only see that there is no self for you to save at all. It has no existence. Your seeing – your seeing of the non-existence of yourself is your salvation. When the ego-self disappears, your spiritual self appears, and that's who you really are.

The meeting is over.