

The Field of Diamonds

A talk by Vernon Howard given on 07-15-84

Once upon a time, there was a village located on the edge of an enormous canyon, very, very wide and very, very deep. And this village, which had been there for a long, long time, had been located at the edge of the canyon, the very broad, deep canyon, because the word had spread around that on the other side of the canyon, way on over there in the misty far bank – the rumor had spread that there were diamonds spread out in an immense diamond field on the opposite bank.

So people, being attracted to the idea of possibly obtaining the diamonds for themselves, they formed a community. And it grew a little bit, and the people in the village spent an enormous amount of time thinking about, talking about, writing articles about, even publishing little pamphlets about the diamonds that were supposed to be on the other side of the wide canyon. And it was of great interest and of great excitement to them. That was their main topic of conversation, besides their everyday life.

So every once in a while – remember, this village has been there for a long, long time – every once in a while a certain man would say to himself, "Ah, they haven't been able to find a way to build a bridge to the other side, they haven't been able to find a way across, but maybe I can do it. Maybe I can get over there, and I'll have the diamonds all to myself."

And it had been true – they'd tried to figure out ways to get across, but there's just no way to do it. They didn't have the engineering or the equipment to get over there to see whether it was true or not, whether there were diamonds there.

So this one man, who was impelled by the personal urge to get rich with diamonds, he went and got some ropes and he got his various amateur and primitive equipment, and he managed to get a little rope across in one way and had it secured on the other side, and he worked back and forth until he managed to get a secure, little tiny bridge for just himself across. A rope. Strong rope. This took him a long time, but he was willing to do it because the idea of getting rich motivated him twenty-four hours a day.

He managed to get across to the other side, and when he got up there, he – wow, with great anticipation and eagerness he searched the area. And at first he didn't find any diamonds; all he found was rocks. He searched a little bit more around. Nothing but rocks. So finally he became disappointed, hardened, bitter, that there were no diamonds there.

So he went on back, and in his – now, you've got to remember, whenever you think about any human being, the single most important thing about him is his nature. Call it his character, call it what kind of a man or woman they are, that is the single most important thing.

Forget whether they've got money, whether they're pretty or unpretty or old

or young or agree with you or disagree with you or they are close to you or distant to you. Forget it! That point alone is enough for you to have been here at this talk to hear the first thing – really now, what kind of a woman is she really? What kind of a man is he really? So we're going to look at the character, the make-up of this man who went across and found only rocks on the other side.

His vanity couldn't take it. And he said, "I put all that work, and I put all that money into buying expensive ropes, and I found nothing. I'm going to – I'm going to get something out of this." No diamonds – severely wounded in his ego that he couldn't come back with a bag full of diamonds and say, "Look what I have found; therefore, look how great I am." He couldn't do that.

So he came on back and began to lie to everyone. Do you know what he told them? This faker, this charlatan, this very evil human being, told everyone that he'd found diamonds over there. He told them about all the hard work he had done – the ropes, working all alone. He said, "I've found diamonds, and I'm going to tell you all about the diamonds that I've found." And he did. He told them that he had proved that there were diamonds on the other side, and that he was actually the owner. He was now a wealthy man because of the diamonds he had found.

And, of course, they asked him, "Where is the evidence of it? Show me some diamonds." Ah, that was something he couldn't answer. Right? Because he hadn't found them. Oh, but I told you, study the nature of the man. Study the nature of the man who told you he's found wealth, found diamonds.

So he simply told a pack of clever lies. He found a dozen reasons for not showing them the diamonds. He said, "Well, I want to wait a while and make it a surprise to you later on." Or, "I'm afraid it might cause a panic of some kind. Everybody will move here." So he found what is called plausible reasons why he shouldn't show them the diamonds.

Now, he was just one man who did that. Five years later, another man crossed over, found only rocks, came on back, lied about it for self-glory's sake. And all these men – quite a number of them – went over and came back and did the very same thing. See, sickos always act the same way. They act like sickos. Self-glory, hatred of anyone who denies their claim, of course.

So these men, all these number of men who went over and didn't find the diamonds came back, and they all established their own little group of followers. They caused great controversy in the village. Some people in the village followed man A, some followed man B, some followed man C. Oh, yes. A couple of women tried it, too, and they came back with the same story. And some of them followed woman A, woman B, woman C. All kind of groups, and they all hated each other. And they all said, "We've got the right leader here. We've got the right one. Follow us." So the whole thing was sick. A terrible state for all the people to live in.

And no one of the group, that group, ever, ever found any diamonds. And so

everyone following – following the leader – the leader-liars – followed them and repeating the same lies. And they all had their little lie books and lie phrases and lying lectures about the diamonds that didn't really exist. And both leaders – get this and you'll understand it – both the leaders and the followers said, "We are now rich."

And isn't it astonishing – how many of you are following this? Isn't it astonishing – those people who said – we'll discuss it a little bit later when we're through with this story, but those people who said, "We're rich," they went around in rags. They didn't even have a donkey to ride on. They walked around town, they lived in huts, and the roof leaked. They didn't have enough energy to repair the roof. They just wanted to wander around town, muttering about all the diamonds they had. Sound familiar? Remember – remember the emperor of the ruins, the miserable wreck sitting in the ruins of his life. That was these people, too. All right.

Now, I've described, of course, human society as it is. Millions of people having their pet little beliefs and theories, all of them saying, "I'm right." All of them saying, "I'm rich, and that other group – that other group is wrong."

In other words, look – all organizations are hypocrites. The very fact that you need to organize means that you're a hypocrite. An individual who isn't sure of himself has to get sickos who are as bad off as he is to support him. They support each other. They tell the same lies to each other and hate the other liars who are telling different lies to each other about the diamonds, and they all hate each other.

Now, this story I'm telling you has a depth to it. Very profound. And please try to see what I'm talking about as I proceed with it. And I'll help you at this point before I proceed by telling you that no matter what spiritual stage you are in, you must never, never, never stop searching, never stop walking.

To come to a standstill in your spiritual life means that you, in your deceit and laziness and evil, prefer to settle down with all the lies that you have at this point. It means that you refuse to bear the humiliation of seeing that you haven't really found diamonds. If you can bear that shame to your ego of saying, "I haven't found diamonds as yet," that is the same as continuing the search. It is so sly within you.

I want you to uncover this and to think about it after the class. You must never under any circumstance stop your search. If you do, any false prophet can come along and give you – give you the exact fairy tale you want to hear. And you'll settle down with that, and you'll go around in rags saying you're rich, you're a prince or a princess, and no one will be able to come up to you and say, "Look, sir, your rags, your tatters, they're falling all around you. And you say you're rich? Can't you see what you're doing? Can't you see how you're lying?"

A common illustration in everyday life: religious man, religious woman, you claim that you know God, and you're standing there claiming you know God with hatred in your face, with violence in your eyes. You are standing there, saying that you are a good person, and you don't see the rags of your

violence and your viciousness.

Ah, how far along are you in the spiritual journey where you can try to convince someone else or yourself that you're rich, and at the same time you look down with great shock at the fact that you have rags on? If you haven't done that, start. You catch yourself faking it and pretending because you've read all these philosophical books, you've gone to a theological seminary, because you've done all these things, you say you're rich. You're not; you're poor. Study the nature as it is; not what they say. Never, never believe what anyone tells you about himself. The reason he needs to tell you nice things is because he has no nice things. That's the contradiction. That's the self-image. Evil people follow evil leaders.

All right. Now, this – this is the state of society. Everyone lying to everyone else that they've got it made, that they're rich, that they're good, and all of them very sick, evil, dark and malicious inside. Okay.

Special point: if a man or woman is bad, you must insist over and over to yourself until you get it – and it's going to take a long time because you don't want to believe it – if you know that a person is bad, that means that everything he will do and say is bad. Though his words might be sweet, his nature, being sour – that is what he will finally give to you.

And it's your responsibility to catch his honeyed words behind which is horror and dripping evil. It is your responsibility to see beyond that smile he puts on, the little act of being gentle, of being knowledgeable. It is your duty to know – look, how simple we could say it. See the simplicity of it? A bad man is a bad man. An evil woman is an evil woman.

Why, you know that in yourself. You should begin to know it. If you're bad, don't you think bad things? How many think bad things? How many have bad emotional responses? Defeated ones, weak ones? We are teaching you in this room how to be authentically strong. You're now weak. You want to believe in your own diamonds, don't you? You want to believe in virtue from yourself. You have no virtue. No human being has one single fraction of a virtue. None at all. He has undevelopment in younger years, and if he refuses development, then he has evil. Because he's refused to go along with the natural growth, the spiritual growth that he could have had.

All right. Once every hundred years – remember, this village has been there for hundreds, thousands of years – with the pattern repeated – different kinds of groups claiming they had found the diamonds. Once every hundred years, a very unique, rare, special kind of human being came to the village. Settled down in it. That was his home. He had a physical self. And he settled down in the village, and he heard all the talk about the diamonds on the other side, and he heard the claims of those who said, "We've been over there and have found them," and wondered about it.

And there's so many groups, claims and conflicting claims, each of them with their own little code of so-called ethics and rules. And he didn't know which one to believe because they all claimed to be right, to have found the diamonds.

And he thought, well, well, maybe one of them is right. He just didn't know what to think. Whether one or all – he just didn't know. He was confused about it. But in this very special man, in his nature, in his character, something special began to develop. And let me tell you what it was. What developed in this man was one special overpowering wish, desire, yearning, aim. That aim was not to find diamonds, a bag full of diamonds for himself so he could come back and brag to everyone, "Look at me. I am rich. I have found the diamonds on the other side."

There was not that in him at all. He was different from the millions of other people who over the thousands of years have lived in that village at the edge of the cliff. Something else had developed in him. And ask God to develop and increasingly develop this aim in you. You know – you know what the aim was? The urge was? To discover whether or not the stories about diamonds – whether they were true or not.

He didn't know. He hadn't been with the others – and he really didn't know! Of course he didn't know. You know something by personal evidence – he had no personal evidence. He hadn't seen any diamonds. You can't see five miles across the canyon.

He wanted – the idea of there being an abundance of diamonds on the other side appealed to him greatly. The idea appealed to him, but not from a selfish viewpoint, but because he wanted to know what if such an incredible thing could exist in the region he occupied, because everyone else there was very poor. And he kept thinking that the wealth that he had heard about, the people wouldn't have to have rags anymore. So his dominating desire was to – ah, see how easy – was to find out for himself whether or not there were really diamonds over there.

So he did what the previous men had done. No one else was going to help him. No one else was interested. Oh, yes. At times, by the way, several groups of men and women in the village got together and formed a little business organization to pool their money and resources to try to find ways to get across. But they fought so badly among themselves over who was going to get the most diamonds – no. The whole thing fell apart. Always fell apart. Fighting with each other.

This one very special man went out and did the preliminary work. He bought some ropes, he found a way to get the first little – little tiny string across and then attached a rope to that and got the rope across. He worked on – he worked on the physical level of ropes and pulleys and relay stations or whatever you call it. He did everything necessary to get the ropes across so he could go on up across the center. He made it. He actually made it to the other side. And he started on – now here he is, five miles across, all alone, no one with him – and here he is on the other side now, and he said, "Here's where the diamonds begin I guess."

So he looked around – no diamonds. He looked over to the left – no diamonds. Just rocks. No diamonds at all. He looked over to the right. "They said there might be diamonds over here." He didn't find a single diamond – just rocks. And he remembered a phrase that he had heard from some of

the people who denied that there were diamonds at all. They had just called it the land of rocks over there. "Maybe it's the land of rocks."

Now, listen carefully to me. This man had – through having a right heart, had received – I have to bring this in now so you'll understand the whole story – this man had received because his heart was – wanted to know – he had received something outside of himself which was a very special communication from the Great Diamond-maker in the Sky. And when he looked around and saw only rocks and no diamonds, he did not turn wrong.

He caught and suspended the sick, evil temptation to be disappointed first and then to try to recover his ego-self by saying, "I know what I'll do. I'll lie about it." As all the others had done. Do you know what he did? Listen to me. What he did – look, I'm telling you, he looked around. He didn't see any diamonds. What he did was to bear the shock, the disappointment, the dismay of not finding anything where the people had said they would be. No diamonds there.

Listen to me. He bore the pain. He didn't try to get rid of the disappointment and the agony he felt. "Well, but I'll be poor all my life. If that's so, so be it. But I am not going to lie. I don't care – I don't care what happens to me, I am not going to tell a lie about it. There are no diamonds there. And that settles it. That's it. There are no diamonds there."

He walked around and saw some more rocks over to the left. He walked around some more – rocks over to the right of him, rocks in back of him – and that man never, never, never went into any form of self-deception because – because his heart was right. He knew – he knew that Truth is more important than anything else in the entire universe. Yes. Just tell the truth regardless of anything and you'll come out all right.

All right. Walking around, not knowing, still not – listen to me. You listen – still not knowing whether diamonds existed or not. He didn't know it. He didn't see any diamonds. But he did know one thing. Do you know what he knew? He knew that he was at peace with himself because he hadn't divided himself with a lie. When you lie, you alienate yourself from Truth, God, Reality, from what really loves you. You divide yourself. You're alienated from it.

Can you understand? He – on his level of development, he just plain felt good because he wasn't punished by falsehood, by inventing something. Do you understand how bad you feel because you lie? You kid yourself and try to kid other people. Do you know how to get rid of the pain? Drop the lie and start telling the truth. It's as simple as that. All right.

Something came from outside that seeker – something came from outside which coincided with what was right in his heart. His right heart. To do what? To do what? To know the truth. The fact – the fact was there were no diamonds. The great creator of all true diamonds sent down a message to his waiting, honest heart, and he felt that heavenly divine communication. He felt it. And when he did, the urge came to him to continue to walk forward. He didn't know whether – he still didn't know whether there were any diamonds anywhere, but the urge came to him to continue to walk and

be watchful.

And he walked for a mile – nothing but rocks. He walked for twenty miles – nothing but rocks. He walked – he walked for one hundred miles – nothing but rocks ahead, nothing but rocks to the left, nothing but rocks to the right. He walked a thousand miles. Listen – listen to me. He walked a thousand miles – nothing but rocks.

You get down on your knees and you thank God for him giving you the spiritual endurance to keep walking. Over five hundred miles, eight hundred miles – all right. This is a story, and we have to make the story logical, and you will understand the connection between the story and the spiritual lessons therein. After fifty thousand miles he found the diamonds.

Oh, would you say that in your spiritual walk you're about one foot away from the edge of the cliff? (Laughter) Did you hear what I said earlier? That the Great Maker of Diamonds came down and spoke to that man. You can't fail – you can't fail if you have God's strength in your heart. All the fakers fail, don't they? Because they had only themselves in their heart. Only the wish for egotistical earthly glory. For heavens sake, how long is your earthly glory going to last? Don't you want eternity?

You don't really have to decide in your mind whether diamonds exist or not – and don't you tell yourself whether they do or not or you'll lie to yourself. And you'll go back to the village and lie to other people. What you have to do – what you have to do is keep your heart honest, keep it pure, so that the communication comes from the Great Maker of All Good Diamonds. True diamonds. The world is filled with fake diamonds, isn't it?

All you have to do is keep your heart right, and then – do you know what becomes the great pleasure of your life? Just walking. Just walking without nervous anticipation of whether you're going to find diamonds or not. Don't you dare say, "In one more mile I'm going to find them," or, "Fifty thousand miles I'm going to find them."

You just keep walking. Get yourself out of the way. If you will remain aloof from your own egotism, from your own wish to find diamonds for self-glory, if you will simply stay empty, that emptiness will be filled with what comes from above. And it will enable you to do the one and only thing that is necessary for you to do, which is for you to just keep walking and never stop at any point no matter how discouraged you get. Discouragement over, "When am I going to find – am I going to find diamonds or not?"

That's sickness talking to you. You want to find diamonds for your purpose, don't you? You want to take a bagful and brag, "I found diamonds." No, no. You do that, you're never going to find them. Will you please – will you please let God tell you what is valuable? It is not valuable for you to be anxious over tomorrow, to be anxious over whether you're going to find diamonds or not. What is valuable for you is to keep that contact with God.

Now, having said all this, if you will stay true to God, you will eventually – yes, yes, yes – you will eventually find diamonds, but you must have no anxiety over it, no personal desire built out of your own vanity for it. A pure

heart will always find the wealth of the spiritual kingdom. That's the one and only thing you have to do is to keep yourself pure. And we have exercises, do we not, for expelling impure thoughts and motives and actions. Keep yourself pure. That purity itself will finally allow the diamonds to appear, and you'll be wealthy in a way that this world knows nothing of, but you will know it, you will have it, and you will have it forever.