

What Do You Think You Are Going To Take With You After You Die?

An excerpt from a talk by Vernon Howard given on 06-14-78, Side 2 at 7 minutes.

What do you think you are going to take with you after you die? You think you are going to take your thoughts with you? Not at all. They perish. Aren't you aware that your thoughts perish – are born and perish a thousand times a day, five thousand times a day and yet in your confusion and your delusion you somehow think that the thoughts you have are going to be taken into eternity. That somehow, you, your thoughts of who you are, this self of yours, you somehow think that they have permanence and they have none at all.

This is why you fear death, because you know very well the impermanence of thinking, self-thinking. So you say, "If I think I am marvelous or I think I am spiritual or I think I am a fake," you are thinking these thoughts about yourself and at least there is a self there to think about, but you are in such agony knowing how you have to keep all these self-thoughts going because if you didn't keep them going they would indeed perish as it is natural and right for them to do and that's your terror.

You fear death because you don't understand what eternity actually consists of. Eternity consists of the ending of all self-centered thoughts. If all self-revolving thoughts were to disappear you would understand both time and eternity. And you would then be in eternity and yet not you.

Now I've just told you about it and you are going to continue to think the way you usually think, aren't you? Maybe some day you'll crack through. Maybe some day you'll stop trying to save yourself – which can't be done – and come back to the very very elementary religious principles which we were taught mechanically when we were younger, which is simply that God alone, Truth alone, Reality alone can deliver us from our miserable wretched little selves. That is a fact.

But you see, you want to keep God and you going at the same time. No go. When you see the falseness of you saving yourself and let go then God will appear. And it will be completely unlike anything that you've presently known. It can't be thought about. It can't be planned. It can't be held on to. It can't be anticipated. It can't be yearned for.

What you can yearn for is not God because you don't know who he is. But what you can yearn for is the ending of the pseudo-idol that you've set up inside of yourself. The idol that lies to you. Oh, it lies to you by saying all day long, "Just around the corner is my salvation." And every time you think it is just around the corner and turn that corner you see that it's around the next one. And this is how you keep yourself alive as the seeker. "I am a seeker after spiritual truths." If you are a seeker, may I ask you why you have never found? You haven't, you know.