

# A Dualistic Non-Dual Rant

Ram (James Swartz)

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**Charles:** Hi, James. Well, I don't know about you, but I sure would not like to be a "teacher" these days or any day, for that matter. Just to set up as a "*guru*" is to deny the very thing you espouse. **Immediate hypocrisy!**

How about using a bit of the *Ribhu Gita*, a snippet from Chapter 3: "Penance and prayers are illusory. Holy waters are illusory. The study of the *Vedas* is illusory. The *homas* (sacrifices) are illusory. Worship of Shiva and others is illusory. *Mantras* (mystic formulas) are illusory. The various castes (*varnam*) and orders of life (*asramas*) are illusory. Auspicious *satsang* and such are illusory. The succession of times such as past and others are illusory. All these valueless, worldly appearances are illusory. The imperishable Supreme *Brahman* is the only Reality."

There is no point, James. No point, my old friend. You talk into the void.

The only teacher I have ever known was this dream of the One experiencing itself as separate. I don't have to find out who I am! I am! And then I am nothing - nothing at all.

Look to Ramana. He never set himself up. Why? Because **you cannot. You simply cannot!! For that "you" is the Supreme Nothing.** To say anything at all like "I teach" is already the great falsehood. **All gurus, if self-proclaimed, are utterly false and inconsistent with the Vedas. Oh, oh, what fun it all is.** If a teacher said this, his hall of devotees would immediately empty. And he wouldn't like that. It's only those old friends, those three great desires, that keep the show of devotee/guru alive: Wealth, Relationship and Status.

Merely the distortions of water that can never be distorted in its nature of water. Can the nature of water be changed if it simply happens that there be a vortex? From the nature of water there is **no** distortion. It's the nature of water after all!! From the distortion all is distorted, however!! The entire mind is merely of the nature of water. Distortions? What distortion? What problem? What teaching?

I am none of it though none of it is apart from me. All is of the nature of distorted illusion which has nothing to with me yet none of it is apart from me. And truly seeing that "distorted illusion" is only from a viewpoint of "distorted illusion" whereas, in fact, it is of the nature of consciousness; one may ask, "Where, then is any distortion?"

It's surely time to be the guruless *guru*. The *Vedas* have this one conclusion in "mind"!! Time to rest in the knowing which knows its knowing. All else - there is nothing else. Our absence is always known.

You probably have no recollection of me. It's of no matter. Though any self-proclaimed *guru*, with or without a "*-ji*" on the end, will by definition teach the falsehood of me-here-teaching-you-there; **this by itself confers the teaching. So tell them all to go home, James!!** Or try it at the very least.

It is great fun, is it not?? It's so hilarious but strangely annoying at the same time. I

just want to hear James. Bless it all.

**James:** Hi, Charles. My, aren't you very non-dual!!! A bit of the *Ribhu Gita* and you're a real *jnani*.

**Charles:** Well, well – I don't know about you.

**James:** That's for sure, Charles. This letter is a fine example of ignorance of your topic, namely me.

**Charles:** ...I sure would not like to be a 'teacher' these days..."

**James:** It's a good thing you aren't; I fear nobody would listen to your rants. Two points here: I am not a *guru* and if I am, I did not "set up" as one. Seems you don't get *Isvara*. *Isvara* sets everything up. I am not a doer. What you think is me is just *Isvara* creating what you think is gurudom. These things only exist in your fevered mind. If you are so non-dual, you won't see as a me and you won't see gurudom. You will only see the self shining. Seems this letter is more about you trying to impress me – or perhaps yourself – with your great wisdom. I wonder if there is any *guru*-envy operating here?

**Charles:** How about a bit of the *Ribhu Gita*?"

**James:** How about a bit of understanding when you quote scripture? I guess we would have to include your anti-*guru* rant in this definition of illusion, wouldn't we? If there is no everything, there is no *Ribhu Gita* or no Charles trying to take the piss out of no-James and this is a no-letter so the irritation that you don't feel when you don't read these words does not exist either.

**Charles:** The only teacher I have ever known was this dream of the One experiencing itself as separate. I don't have to find out who I am! I am! And then I am nothing – nothing at all."

**James:** Seems like you have been in non-dual world a little too long. Don't you think it's time to get a day job?

**Charles:** Look to Ramana. He never set himself up. Why? Because you cannot. You simply cannot!! For that 'you' is the Supreme Nothing."

**James:** I covered the "set up" idea above. To follow your logic, however, we would have to conclude that I cannot have set myself up because I am the Supreme Nothing.

**Charles:** To say anything at all like "I teach" is already the great falsehood. All gurus if, self-proclaimed are utterly false and inconsistent with the Vedas. Oh, oh, what fun it all is."

**James:** I didn't say I was a *guru*. If you read my writings and watch my videos, you cannot make this statement. Over and over I have made it clear that I am not a *guru* as that word is popularly understood. I said I was a teacher of Vedanta. As far as the Vedas are concerned, I think you probably could use a bit of education on the topic. Which part of the Vedas are you referring to? In fact, the *jnanakanda* of the Vedas

insists on the necessity of a *guru* for *moksa*. You are ill-informed and just spouting off steam.

**“Charles:** If a teacher said this, his hall of devotees would immediately empty. And he wouldn't like that. It's only those old friends those three great desires that keep the show of devotee/*guru* alive: Wealth, Relationship and Status.”

**James:** It is very clear that you don't know what you are talking about. *Guru* wannabes write this kind of stuff to make themselves feel superior. The tone of your letter is very condescending – so much for your vaunted non-duality. Your statements are purely projections. The “James” you are writing to is only a James in your mind. It has nothing to do with me. On one hand you say I am the Supreme Nothing, and now you say that I have devotees, wealth and status. Which one is it?

If you know so much about the *Vedas* how do you explain the fact that the *rishis* were householders and the great kings like Janaka, who had *gurus*, were also *jnanis*?

I am not sure why you have a bone to pick with me. I don't hear from you for many years and you suddenly appear and have a lot of stupid, unkind things to say. You are quite delusional.

**“Charles:** Merely the distortions of water that can never be distorted in its nature of water. Can the nature of water be changed if it simply happens that there be a vortex? From the nature of water there is no distortion. It's the nature of water after all!! From the distortion all is distorted, however!! The entire mind is merely of the nature of water. Distortions? What distortion? What problem? What teaching? What anger, what anxiety, what senses, what body, what me?

“I am none of it though none of it is apart from me. All is of the nature of distorted illusion, which has nothing to with me yet none of it is apart from me.

“And truly seeing that ‘distorted illusion’ is only from a viewpoint of ‘distorted illusion’ whereas, in fact, it is of the nature of consciousness one may ask, ‘Where, then is any distortion?’”

**James:** Did you plagiarize this passage too, Charles? My God, you are full of yourself! The only distortion going on here is your understanding of me and the scripture.

**“Charles:** It's surely time to be the gurulesse guru. The *Vedas* have this one conclusion in ‘mind’!! Time to rest in the knowing which knows its knowing. All else – there is nothing else. Our absence is always known.”

**James:** You poor man. What are you on? I think it's time for you to get a grip, Charles. Did you actually consider how silly it is to write this kind of letter? It makes you look like a fool. Did you expect me to have an emotional breakdown, put on a hair shirt and flagellate myself in public because I am an unenlightened gurugic hypocrite? What did you hope to accomplish apart from trying to make yourself out to be some kind of spiritual genius?

I am not who you think I am. What you see is a projection of your own insufficiency. It looks like envy to me. You have been pursuing the truth for way too long. I wish you well, but grow up, man! If you have something helpful to say, say it. Otherwise, keep it to yourself.

**Charles:** You probably have no recollection of me but we met in India. It's of no matter. Though any self-proclaimed *guru* will by definition teach the falsehood of me-here-teaching-you-there, this by itself confers the teaching. So tell them all to go home, James!!"

**James:** It is true. I don't remember you. If you were what you seem to claim you are, you would not waste your time writing this kind of rubbish. It doesn't insult me. It insults you.

**Charles:** Or try it at the very least."

**James:** It is quite amazing that you have such contempt for *gurus*, yet you *guru* me without shame.

**Charles:** It is great fun, is it not?? It's so hilarious but strangely annoying at the same time."

**James:** It seems it's great fun for you. I can't say that I am laughing at anything other than your blatant, almost masturbatory self-regard. Since we have established that you are only talking to yourself, you must be annoyed with yourself, Charles. You don't annoy me. You irritate and vaguely amuse me - with a dollop of pity thrown in. But I really must thank you insofar as you just give me an opportunity to write another *satsang* exposing mindless arrogance masquerading as enlightenment.

**Charles:** I just want to hear James."

**James:** You heard him, Charles. I hope what he said is helpful but it will probably just confirm your view that James is - well, whatever Charles cares to think he is. You are living in a fantasy, Charles. Get a life.

**Charles:** Hold on, James, whoa, there - steady - please forgive my arrogance. I didn't mean you were an intentionly gurugic hypocrite. I meant rather that no matter what, duality has its nature based in hypocrisy and, for that matter, arrogance. *Isvara* is indeed very knowing. Ho, ho, ho.

Arrogance is merely the ignorance of apparently not knowing. And hypocrisy is its faithful spouse. So it is never wise to criticise. And I was not wise. But, I admit, I do have a healthy scepticism as you do yourself of "gurudom," as you put it. Indeed, it was yourself both in the "*satsangs*" of 2009 and from your writings that show clearly your distaste for Neo this and *advaita* that, and a general anti-*guru* position. So, why the outright hostility? "Ignorance," "*guru-envy*" (that one hurt, ouch!), "gone berserk," "You are victim," "*Guru wannabes*," "You are ill-informed," "You are a bit of a moron," etc. So - wow!!

The words I sent into cyberspace had more power than I wanted. Why? Because of the "personal." What I wanted from you, I suppose, was the same scepticism applied to your own role as you apply to those others.

**James:** In other words, you think I am a hypocrite. What you got back from me was exactly what your words created. You need to be careful when you use them. I knew what I was saying when I attacked you. I did it on purpose to get your attention. Words create *karma*. This is your *karma*. And who are you to want skepticism - or

anything else for that matter – from me, a complete stranger? What planet do you come from?

**Charles:** In other words, a sense of fun and humility with our *vasanas* and predispositions. We all know we are not the parts we play, or at least a teacher should know. So what I wanted was a sense of fun and wide intelligence. But the “personal” ruined it all. And for this I am sorry, because despite some of the things you have said I sort of came to respect you for them. Whereas now you have sort of choked off a “real interchange.”

**James:** A “real interchange”? This is how you start a “real interchange”? Where are your manners? You bust into my life out of the blue with this kind of rant and you want a real interchange?

**Charles:** You see, James, you have taken the fun out of it. You are a bit serious and taking your life a bit seriously, a sure sign of confusion.

**James:** I expect the people who write me to show common courtesy. “Next to good manners, enlightenment is the most important thing in the world.” ~ Dogen. If people are rude to me, I don’t let it pass. It is right to stand up to nonsense.

**Charles:** Sorry to have upset you. And I am sure that you are sorry for that unsolicited outburst. Won’t trouble you again – unless it’s necessary!!

**James:** No, I’m not sorry. You could use a wake-up call. So you will decide when it is necessary to “trouble” me? You didn’t trouble me – you are trouble. I don’t know whether to cry or laugh. What world are you coming from? In any case, I accept your apology.

If I want advice I ask for it. I didn’t ask your opinion. I am an ordinary human being expressing well-justified irritation. I think you would be well served to obtaining a loving connection with whomever you wish to speak. *Isvara* has created a public life for me. People like me and the listen to what I have to say. I say what I say well and it is usually helpful. Obviously, my letter to you was not particularly kind but maybe you will think about it. Unfortunately, public figures are easy hooks on which to hang projections, positive and negative.

I get many many emails a month and everyone sticks to the topic, to whit: *moksa* according to Vedanta. The conditions for writing me are explained on the website. If you don’t like me for some reason, fine. It doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter if you do. It only matters how you treat me. If I treat you badly, I am the issue. But I never treated you badly until now. And I did it very consciously because, hopefully, it might knock some sense into you. Do you think I enjoy writing this kind of letter?

I shouldn’t have to read an email twice to figure out what the person is saying. I did go back and have a look, and concluded that if your meaning was benign, which I doubt, at best you are a very bad communicator. I am sorry for the hard words. Accept my apologies.

I can't think of anything that irritates me more than people who express opinions without a shred of evidence to back them up. Your likes and dislikes – what you think about me – are just your likes and dislikes. You are welcome to them. If you really are committed to convincing me that I am deluded, then you should wait until you are asked for your opinion. If you find me receptive, present a logical intelligent argument based on facts.

For reasons known only to you, you seem to think that I am a hypocrite and should quit teaching, and you seem to delight in the idea of my demise. If a stranger told you that you should not be doing what you are doing, you would dismiss them out of hand. It is natural. Anyway, the well has been poisoned and that's that. I wish you well.

**Charles:** My apology is to have taken a potshot. Easy to do. Nowadays. And not expressed the thing clearly enough. So sorry about that. I shouldn't have said anything!!

**James:** Yes, one needs to set up a context when one writes an email, particularly when the respondent and the writer don't know each other. And really, Charles, one should have one's ducks in line when one speaks.

I read your first email to my wife. She said it was motivated by envy. I actually dumped it in the trash because I thought it was rubbish, but she convinced me to write you. I will publish it too as a kind of warning to others of what to expect from me if they have a bone to pick and go off half-cocked spouting a lot of nonsense. Fortunately it doesn't happen often.

Since we have cleared the air, let me tell you how I think about myself. I honestly don't think of myself as a guru as the term is used these days. *Isvara* is the *guru*. I know who I am and I follow the rules of the *sampradaya* when I teach. I don't advertise and I don't charge for the teaching. I don't have devotees or disciples. I just see the self in doubt when people come to me. I did not solicit fame. You may think it is desirable but it has a definite downside. I got *moksa* through my *guru* 45 years ago. I lived alone in a cabin in the mountains and in cheap rooms in India for 40. In 2009 I wrote a book that made me famous. I took it as *prasad* from *Isvara*. I am not attached to teaching or to the people who listen, although I meet the most extraordinary beings and I love them all. ShiningWorld will keep growing. It is a totally organic entity controlled by *Isvara*. I just serve.

**Charles:** In other words, my "*sadhana*" is to disappear, else face the removal of "protection."

**James:** That's a tad romantic, isn't it? I don't know about disappearing. As awareness you are already disappeared, and as Charles you will disappear when you die. If you follow *dharma* in every situation there is no need to disappear. Just find something uplifting to say and say it without expectation. You can never hide from the world because the world is you.

**Charles:** It's quite simple. Mine is not the route of telling anybody anything.

**James:** My, you seem to have had quite a change of heart.

**Charles:** I undertook something many years ago and only now do I realise it must be done in silence. Yes, I don't mind saying it – this mind is not particularly bright!!

**James:** I have to admit that that thought crossed my mind a few times. : -)

**Charles:** So again, James, thanks. As I said, I wouldn't want to be any teacher but now I know the "why." But this does not devalue your own path, does it?

**James:** I think you do have a desire to be heard – nothing wrong with it –but if you want people to listen, you have to have something uplifting to say. You must be able to show them who they are. It is easy to sit life out and look at it from the non-dual point of view, and imagine that you are beyond it all and render criticisms. But the best path is "in it but not of it."

I am not on a path, actually. The path is on me.

But speaking as James, no. I have no path. *Ishvara* does everything. My mind thinks by Its grace and my body moves by Its grace, and I just observe. I am not going anywhere. My path ended a long time ago by the grace of my *guru*.

**Charles:** I will be in touch if you wish it. Oh, and by the way, cut the terminal stuff like "the well has been poisoned" – any ego-bashing is good, is it not?

**James:** It's good if it teaches one something. I hate it. I am quite capable of bashing my own ego. I wasn't trying to bash yours. It was a simple matter: I was just pissed off because you were so presumptuous and rude.

**Charles:** You will always have my respect. Keep going and take no notice of people like me. I will not venture again into public excepting to laugh and laugh.

**James:** Everyone is worthy of notice – the cranky, the lonely, the loveless. Good luck with everything.

~ James