

Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi
SUMMER *SESSHIN* LECTURE: 6:30 PM
Thursday, July 29, 1965
Lecture C
Soko-ji Temple, San Francisco

Tape Operator: The Wednesday—or, no not Wednesday—Thursday night, 6 p—6:15 lecture. Starting.

Suzuki-rōshi: Do you have some question—some more question?

Student A: Reverend Suzuki, would you please talk about what the Buddhists think about killing or about—maybe there's a precept or a doctrine—

Suzuki-rōshi: About killing?

Student A: About killing.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student A: Because it's hard to understand, with all the killing that is happening in the world, why [2-3 words] stop.

Suzuki-rōshi: About killing. What do you think it is "not to kill"?

Student A: It's not to kill.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. Not to kill. What do—do we mean, you think?

Student A: What—what do you mean?

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student A: Well, I've always thought that's just what it meant, not to kill, not to—trampling [?] down on, or maybe not even to think about it. I don't know.

Suzuki-rōshi: This is very—maybe pretty difficult question to answer, not to kill. The—"not to kill" means fundamentally it means not to be dualistic [laughs]. If I say so it's—it may not be the right answer to your question. When we become dualistic, you know, we—we have precepts, you know, not to kill. Not to kill means don't kill. But actually there is nothing to kill [laughs], actually. If everyone has buddha-nature, you know, that buddha-nature is something like what I

talked about this time. It is impossible to kill. You can kill someone's body, but its true nature cannot be killed. So not to kill means it is not matter of kill or not to kill. Even though you try to kill someone, it is impossible. If you know that it is impossible, no one will try to kill some—some other person. Because you think it is possible, you kill someone.

Student B: Reverend Suzuki, even though—even if we—even if to kill somebody else's body, does—don't they have to lend themselves to the act? I mean, act- [partial word]—don't we actually assist them in their own desire for death, rather than taking out of our world someone [?] out of theirs?

Suzuki-rōshi: I couldn't follow you. Excuse me. Will you say it again?

Student B: Well, the—the person that is killed, the one who decides, who has it in to kill [?]-the killer just lends himself to the mistake.

Suzuki-rōshi: To—to?

Student B: Yeah, the killer just lends himself—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student B: —to the mistake.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student B: The person who is killed—

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student B: —is the one who decides to die.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student B: He is the one who makes the mistake.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, who—the one who wanted to kill.

Student B: How could he want [?] who is killed, also?

Suzuki-rōshi: Who is killed?

Student B: Yes. He chooses, you know, like the man who throws himself on the sword. I mean, you know, he gives himself to the sword.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student C: Yeah, we give ourselves to the atomic bomb.

Student B: Yeah.

Student C: —when it's dropped wherever.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, that is a kind of suicide.

Student B: Yeah, yeah it is. I think every person that dies commits a kind of suicide. Otherwise it's performance.

Suzuki-rōshi: When we kill—try to kill, there is mistake, you know, in understanding of our life. Because we do not know it is impossible to kill, so we try to kill. And—but your question or answer, I don't know what—

Student B: When we die, there is the same mistake because we do not know it's impossible to die.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. When you think you are dying, that is the same mistake.

Student B: Same mistake.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. It is impossible for us to die. We do not die actually.

Student B: Right. Right. Right.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, that is just maybe the same mistake. So if everyone understand this point, no one will kill—try to kill anybody. So not to kill is to realize our true nature. That is the interpretation of the precepts not to kill.

Student D: We should [1-2 words] violent acts to those too [or two].

Suzuki-rōshi: Increase? Include?

Student D: Include violence.

Suzuki-rōshi: Violence?

Student D: Violence.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, violence, yes. All the precepts—it include this idea of our true nature. To realize our true nature includes all the precepts, not only not to kill or not to steal. Not to steal is—there is nothing to steal [laughs], because you have it. Don't tell a lie. We cannot tell any lie [laughs]. Because you think it is possible you try to tell a lie, but it is impossible. Even though you try to tell a lie—you know you are telling lie, and if you know that, everyone will know it. So it is impossible.

Student E: How can we avoid being angry—

Suzuki-rōshi: Angry?

Student E: —or resentful or jealous or suspicious of other people?

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student E: How can we guard ourselves from dipping [?] into that kind of precept?

Suzuki-rōshi: Anger is one of the most—one of the strongest, you now, evil desires: greedy—greediness and anger and ignorance. But all those things comes from ignorance. When we [are] ignorant of our true nature, we become angry. It is want of—it is want of subtle understanding. That is anger.

Student E: What I meant was how can we avoid when it's—when we can—when we know it's [1 word], when it starts to come up, or when —sometimes I feel angry toward a person, but I hold it back and just—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student E: —I know there's anger going on, but that—but it stills come back. And I don't know—or sometimes I feel that I—I feel like criticizing someone else, and then I shut up. But I still feel the—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's too late, you know [laughs, laughter]. So you must be angry. That's all what you should do [laughs]. When you become angry, you—you should be angry. That's all [laughs, laughter]. Don't criticize yourself, and just—you cannot be always angry, you know. Anger just one or [2-3 words]. So that's all. That's—when you notice it, that's too late. So it may be better to be angry. And after you realize that that was mistake [laughs], you have to try not to be angry again. If you—this is the point. If you think you should not be angry, you know—this is—it means you are caught by precepts. "You should not be angry," that is not precept, actually. When you keep it, that is precepts, but when you violate it that is not precepts anymore. That is just mistake. So we do not talk about

anger which you—which came up already. That anger is the anger—psychological anger, not religious anger. Religious anger is our—before we become angry, that is religious anger. So if you are really religious, you have no anger and you keep precepts.

Student F: [4-6 words] this topic. The only question maybe would be [4-6 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: [*Aside.*] Would you shut the door?

Student F: I was wondering about the killing of animals—the technical or superficial [1-2 words]. According to what little I know about monasteries, vegetarianism isn't opposed if you're on a diet because of the elimination of the killing of animals. And I thought—I imagined if there weren't any killing of animals, it would be a [1-2 words] of animals living it up [laughs, laughter].

Suzuki-rōshi: Animals, you know—not only animals, but [laughter], you know, vegetable you eat is also living being, you know. But if we talk about—this kind of discussion is, you know, not purely religious discussion. But it is religious because if we do something, you know, wrong, that—it—that action create—will create another bad action or habit. This is very important point. If you do something wrong, that experience will create some other bad conduct. That is why some people emphasize the experience is the origin of the conscience.

Student F: In other words, this concept of "sinner" would be—sin?—would be any activity that causes one to fall short of enlightenment?

Suzuki-rōshi: Sin. Sin and enlightenment is the two sides of the one coin. Sin—when you said you are sinful, you have enlightenment. Enlightened mind says you are sinful.

Student F: Not "civil."

Suzuki-rōshi: Huh? Sinful.

Student F: Sinful. Oh, sinful.

Suzuki-rōshi: Your mind—enlightened mind says you are sinful. This is two side of the one coin. Pure Land sect emphasize this side. And they try to, you know, they try to—this side into—turn this side into the other side. That is possible because it is two side of the one coin. It—it is—it is the same thing, you know, actually the same thing. Don't you think so? Quite different thing?

Student F: But in [a] sinner, one generally isn't willing to admit that he is [a] sinner.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. Is sinner. When you think he is sinner, he is enlightened in another word. The same thing. He is [1 word] he is enlightened—he is enlightened his true nature. He cannot be just, you know, enlightened. If both sides is enlightened [laughs], he is not—not—he—it doesn't mean anything. He even exist—does not exist. There is no such a thing, no such a person. Someone may say, "I am enlightened. I don't mind whatever I do." That is [laughs] crazy. He is crazy. He lost his personality. Don't you think so? If he admits himself just sinful, and no hope to be enlightened, or no hope to be saved by Buddha or Christ, he is, you know, crazy too. For a man it—it is impossible to think that way. There must be some hope to live, some hope to be saved. Even though he admits himself to be sinful, he has still hope to be saved or else he cannot exist. At the same time, if he say, "For me, there is no sinful life. I am quite safe. Whatever I do, it's all right." He is also crazy. If you think if you are enlightened, after you're enlightened you can do whatever you like, that is big mistake [laughs, laughter].

Student G: Since they—in the sūtra they say our discriminations are carried forward by habit energy, how can we understand them in relation to the practice?

Suzuki-rōshi: You—your present bad action, you mean, is—

Student G: Well, I was thinking in terms of duality.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student G: Is it carried on by what they call "habit energy"?

Suzuki-rōshi: Habit—habitual energy? Habits—that is result of the previous wrong conducts.

Student G: How can we understand them [1-2 words] in relation to our present conduct—

Suzuki-rōshi: In relation—on—in the interrelation of practice. What is the relationship between the—that statement and our practice, you mean?

Student G: How can we avoid creating more habits?

Suzuki-rōshi: The—our purpose of practice is to cut completely [laughs] down the habitual power, you know. To—to be completely from—free from our habitual, you know, energy or whatever it is—habits—habitual power or which is [?] so-called-it karma. At least we should no doubt [?] we are intrinsically free from karma. Karma is

something which we create—we create karma, and we—we suffer from it. So pure religion is in the realm of—there is no creation or no—no [2-3 words said quietly]—what is opposite of "create"?

Student: Annihilate?

Suzuki-rōshi: Hmm?

Students: Annihilate? Destruction? Destroy?

Suzuki-rōshi: Not "destroy," but—

Student: Eradicate?

Suzuki-rōshi: To become—you know, create means—in Buddhism, "to create" means to accumulate some elements and create something. And when those factors become separated, there is no—nothing left. Composed—"all composed being," we say. You know, this is [?] composed of body.

So our purpose of zazen is to get out of the usual understanding of create or destroy or, you know—this—this kind of scientific philosophical thinking. When we are free from those thinking, there is no creation or no destroy. We are always free from those defilements. And we know this is our true nature. When we know that there is no more continuity of the karma, we can stop the karma. Even for a moment you can do it.

Student H: Isn't sitting there part of your karma?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student H: Just—we stop the old stuff.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. Stop everything [laughs] completely. Because we can stop it, because we do not even to stop it just to practice, you know—we don't try to stop anything. Even we do not try to stop it. When you try to stop—as long as you try to stop, it will not work.

Student I: I think that's a pretty interesting point that this comes up—an idea that requires effort in order to transform habits is not necessary to create striving toward elimination of the particular conditioned habit. But, like you pointed out, just to focus your attention on the habit at a particular moment is not a very good [2-3 words]—that it's true it's not necessary to use effort. And yet there is effort to bring about—to bring about the change. Effortless effort, maybe. So it too may be difficult.

Suzuki-rōshi: No, it is not difficult. But there should not be any misunderstanding, you know, in what you said, you know. If something add [?] to him [laughs], you know, that will create some problem. It should be purely [?] so. When you say something or when you try to figure out what is our teaching or what is our way, already there is some, you know—your own idea is in it. In that case, it will not work [laughs].

Student I: The thing affects me too—that it's—

Suzuki-rōshi: This is very important.

Student I: Finding a solution to an answer—to a question is like it's verbal.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah. It isn't verbal.

Student I: It doesn't—it doesn't [1 word] into the room [?].

Suzuki-rōshi: So we cannot—it is just conclusion, and it should not be any thesis for to get some—some other conclusion. You may say it is so because we can do such-and-such things [laughs]. That is using —abusing the teaching. Teaching is the teaching, the peak [?]. Your conduct should not be based on just verbal teaching. Your inmost nature will tell you, you know. That is true teaching. What I say is not true teaching. I just give you the hint, you know.

Student J: Seems to me this has got [?] a unique great mistake or a sacrilege to [2-4 words]—

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh. Yes.

Student J: —to cop to some solution or delusion.

Suzuki-rōshi: It will easily become delusion—misunderstanding if you, you know, attach to the statement. If you, you know, if you realize something in your heart, in your, you know, in your sight, "This is it," that is the teaching. What I say is not [laughs]—is just suggestion. "Have you something like this?" I say to you. And if you say, "Oh, yes I have the same thing here," that is the true teaching. That is so-called-it enlightenment.

Student K: Is there any real difference between our waking state and our dream state?

Suzuki-rōshi: Not much difference, maybe. Dream land [?]-if you say dream, all what we are doing is dream [laughs, laughter].

Student K: Aren't we?

Suzuki-rōshi: Huh?

Student K: Aren't we?

Suzuki-rōshi: Maybe so [laughing, laughter]. Maybe so [?]. Ninety-nine percent we are dreaming.

Student L: Is there any conflict between pursuing the true and beautiful and seeking buddha-nature? Or can we seek the buddha-nature through the [2-4 words]?

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh—[laughs].

Student L: Should I repeat it?

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, please.

Student L: Is there a conflict between seeking the good, true, and beautiful through science [?], art, and so forth—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Student L: —and seeking your buddha-nature? Or can you seek buddha-nature through the true and beautiful?

Suzuki-rōshi: The way is different, you know. The—to pursue for beauty or truth or good is different from the pursuit of holy nature of—within ourselves. The way is different. But there is no conflict because the pursue of truth and—or good or beauty is based on our inmost nature. There should not be conflict. But when you—your conclusion invent, you know, religious feud [?], there you have conflict. As long as your pursue is limited [to] your own way, it is—there is no conflict. If science just become science, and if philosopher just become philosopher, and religious people accept the conclusion of scientist and philosophers, there is no conflict. And it should be so. Sometime we invade, you know. That is—from religious point of view the scientific research means nothing if I say so. This is invade, to invade other pursuit. Pursue of knowledge and pursue of the, you know, holy mind—not "mind," but holiness is quite different thing.

Student M: You spoke yesterday on the fact that this innermost part, this [1-2 words] that wants to save all of man—even though it might not be possible in this life, but nevertheless we should try. And I wonder what can be done for the person who has cunningly deceived himself into being satisfied intellectually that he is there or he is [3-6 words]. You know, what—what indication—how could it be pointed out

to that person, even though it may hurt, to show him that he is upside-down?

Suzuki-rōshi: You know, I think you—I understood you, what you said just now. Scientific research or intellectual understanding of religion is not always wrong. And intellect—why we have intellect is to correct our emotional faculty, you know. Our emotional faculty is so—sometime so—is not so clear and is not so correct, you know. Some correction is wanted for emotional function of our mind, or else, you know, we don't know whether what I feel is right or wrong. That is, you know, the characteristic of emotional function of our mind. So it is necessary to correct it so that we can rely on our emotional faculties. So it is necessary. But even though intellectual understanding can correct our emotional faculty, that correction is not, you know, will not help you so much unless you realize the original nature of—true nature of yourself. It is just emotional—the—our function, our life in realm of emotional and intellectual realm.

So we don't know the deeper strength of emotional intellect. So it will not help you so much. It will not encourage you, you know, just correction. Moral will not correct you, will not encourage you so much unless you have some good example who is wise and moral, you know. Some is—if someone who is great, if some good example, if you have some good example, it will give you some encouragement. But just intellectual correction will not encourage—will not help you so much. In this—so we say that is not enough. The religious experience is something more than that and something different, completely different from our intellect or emotional feeling. So we should not ignore our intellect, but we should not be limited. Our faculties should not be limited in emotional or intellectual realm. Do you understand? So we should be reasonable, and we should be emotional too.

Student N: What happens if a person dies without realizing his buddha-nature? What happens to his buddha-nature?

Suzuki-rōshi: What happens to buddha-nature? Nothing happen to it. It is always same and constant. The buddha-nature is always taking activity. It is in incessant activity. That is—there is not two buddha-nature. There is only one buddha-nature for everyone, for everything. And it is always in incessant activity. Even though we are sleeping, it—it is in activity.

Student O: I thought you [2 words] that buddha-nature was calm, that we had no idea how quiet and calm—

Suzuki-rōshi: Calm activity [laughs, laughter].

Student M: The previous question [3-4 words] it was not sure [2-4 words] those are things that cleared up. You know, there is this information [2-4 words] that once you held [2-4 words], by its very nature, what—what could be—maybe it's too personal—but what could be done to help that person to see himself that his previous knowledge—his so-called self-knowledge [1-2 words] is not real [1-2 words] of intellectual [1-2 words] which is not, of course [1 word]—

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student M: —but [6-8 words] so it's contented to continue on and accumulate it and more information in such a way that it is not bringing about any change at all, but it appears to be changing. Um—

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh, I see. Uh-huh. This is very difficult, you know. This is bodhisattva's way. You should be bodhisattva in such case, you know. It is very hard to make them realize what they are doing, you know, because they do not know anything but what he is doing. And he thinks what he does is right and perfect—not "perfect"—he has no time to think about something else. His life is completely occupied by some particular research. But if he is a human being, he will have time when he find himself uneasy.

Student M: [1-3 words] a great deal of patience, maybe.

Suzuki-rōshi: When he talks with you [laughs], he will not say so, but he must have time to feel lonely, if he [is] just occupied by some particular research without having any understanding of religion or other science.

Student O: I remember reading one time, someone that—I mean—that man, Jesus Christ, said they are forgiven for they do not know. I think in time they will be all forgiven. I wonder if we need permission to be a Zen master when the time is right, that we feel to be right, so right that—like [2-3 words] here, for example, to sit and kick someone in the shin, or hit him in the face to have him see?

Suzuki-rōshi: I—I couldn't follow you.

Student O: I wonder if we need permission. I mean—

Suzuki-rōshi: Permission?

Student O: —well, I wondered if we feel like we're qualified to, you know, laugh [?], you know, and—and if there's something very familiar, I suppose it's all right to do so.

Suzuki-rōshi: It is—we don't know if it is all right or not, you know [laughs], before he does it. It is impossible to know, and there is no qualification in religious life. Everyone is same, actually.

Student P: But isn't the one qualification that—is that the student comes to the teacher?

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student P: The teacher does not go to the student and wish to change him or wish to show him—

Suzuki-rōshi: Show students, you mean?

Student P: The teacher doesn't go to the student and say, "See what you're doing wrong?" The student comes to the teacher and asks for instruction or asks for a kick in the shin or whatever the expression happens to be.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student P: It does seem to me, in my own personal feeling, to be wrong to try to show someone else my beliefs. If they are serious or interested, I will direct them here or direct them to acquaint them with a book that I know, or tell them of my own personal experience. But it seems as though they have to make a serious inquiry first rather than for me to try to convert them.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Student Q: Supposing that person is really suffering—

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah.

Student P: You haven't the right to judge—

Student Q: No, it's not judgment.

Student P: I don't know.

Student Q: And it's not belief either.

Student R:¹ Sensei, isn't part of the problem is that we don't—we don't want to part with the person's friendship. In other words, if we—if we are willing to give them up, then we can tell them fairly easily that he's [1 word]. It's when we—when we don't want to be—have him angry with us or don't want to him to turn on us that we find it

¹ Student R's questions are delivered very rapidly and with agitation.

difficult to tell him that he's wrong, or that we think he's wrong. You know, we can't tell him we think he's wrong. But the real problem is that we don't want to—we don't want to give him up. Because we complain, he complains.

Suzuki-rōshi: I mix up [laughs, laughter] which is he and— [laughter].

Student R: Well, okay, just imagine the question, because—because what do you do—tell this person?

Suzuki-rōshi: Huh?

Student R: He just hates that. Just in answering his question [preceding sentences unclear]. The problem that we opened up—we are praying [?] for that person too. And we couldn't go. That is, if we would just simply turn around and walk away, you know, if we would let him go, then he would have lost something, and he would realize that his actions led to some loss.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Student R: That's why we can't tell him—because we want—we want to save him [?].

Student S: That's—that's a— [Student begins to comment and is interrupted by SR.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Excuse me. Don't—

Student S: —that's a detachment or object attitude. I think this kind of—

Suzuki-rōshi: What did you mean? [Speaking to Student P.] If you have some pure experience within yourself, you know, in that case to present that experience to teacher? When you present that experience to the teacher, and teacher may say that is good or bad, or perfect or imperfect. In this case, what do you think? Or, do you think it's much better than to—[not] to submit your experience to the teacher—not to is much better? Do you think that way, or—

Student P: Do I think it's better not to submit it?

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. Or—

Student P: I—I have to admit I think first that you should—the student should go to the teacher. But I don't think the teacher should go to the student.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student P: I don't believe in talking [?] about it—the missionary spirit [laughter].

Suzuki-rōshi: Mmm. Oh, I see. That's very good [laughs]. Oh, that's what I'm—what I think, you know, we say—it—it is same thing with Christianity. If you don't, you know—what do we say? "If you do not ask, he will not answer."

Student T: "Seek and ye shall find."

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm. That is true. Missionary spirit is not just to spread, you know, some teaching of Buddha or to force something to people or to utilize—to do something by the—by name of the missionary work. That is not fair, I think. When you—they want something, he should be prepared for giving something. And if they are lazy he should strike him [laughs]. That is all right. If he's sleeping: "Don't sleep. Get up!" [Laughs.] And think more. This is good, I think.

Student U: [2-4 words.] I quite agree with what has been said, and I think something's been added to the conversation which seems to me, not to get too complicated, but it sort of connotes a Christian attitude—a missionary spirit. It's like, of course, nothing to do with Buddhism, like a—that kind of [1-2 words] missionary spirit [?]. But I [4-6 words] between a student and teacher, and to—to—to feel this compassion or this need to not change a person but perhaps to have him see something that he has not seen that he might see in order to—to be—I guess depending on the circumstances, you should [1-2 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: We cannot change his character or what he did or what he will do. It is very difficult. But there is no need to change him. If they have—if he has right understanding of his character, that's good enough. So as a conclusion: to put high place we should put high place. To put something which should be put in—at low place should be put at low place, is religion—our religion.² There is no secret.

Student V: When someone needs help, when someone is ready to be helped, he will seek help. But if you go out and try to help them, isn't

² Alluding to Dōgen-zenji's *Instructions for the Tenzo (Tenzokyōkun)*: "For all the various things, put away in high places things that belong in high places, and put away in low places the things that belong in low places" (from *Dōgen's Pure Standards for the Zen Community*, translated by Taigen Daniel Leighton and Shōhaku Okumura, SUNY Press, 1996, pp. 35-36).

that sort of like trying—isn't that sort of self-love, the way you try to transform another person into the image of yourself?

Suzuki-rōshi: Oh, image of self.

Student V: In other words—

Suzuki-rōshi: Here is—

Student V: —if you go around trying to help people, you know, make them see your way, what you think is right, that is really self-love because you're trying to change the people into your own image.

Suzuki-rōshi: Uh-huh.

Student V: You're trying to make people be like yourself. That's really self-love.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student V: That's selfish. You need them more than they need you.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student V: So if you're really sincere, you'd let them come to you, instead of going to them.

Suzuki-rōshi: Yeah, I think so. That's—

Student V: [3-5 words.] Prophets. The old prophets. Just—just [1-2 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Image of—

[Break in tape of unknown duration. Resumes with SR in mid-sentence.]

... occasion—what will be the, you know, image of human being, right human being, good human being. But there should not be some proper image, you know, some particular image, I think. Everyone should be their own—in their own mold. That is why we have, you know, we won't cover [?] [laughs]. To keep everyone active and happy there should be something—that is—if there is teaching, that is the teaching. This teaching do not force anything [on] any particular person. Everyone is the same under the heaven. Everyone is the same in the common bathtub in Japan [laughing]. Do you know the Japanese common bath? They may be always five or five to six people in the big bath—bathtub. They're enjoying in it, washing and talking. It's wonderful [laughter]. That is our, you know, idea. And even so,

when we do not use the bathtub, we want cover to it. When, you know, people get into it, we should take off the cover and enjoy to the bath with people in the same way—not "in the same way," but they are friend, just friend. There is no rich person [laughing] or poor person in the common bath when they are naked. And they can talk anything in the common bath—bathtub. Even so, when we do not use it, there should be cover to it.

That cover is wanted, if you want to enjoy the bath. That is our teaching. Our teaching is not, "You should do like this," or, "Society should be like this," or, "Human being should be like this." This kind of—we have no[ne of] this kind of thinking or idea. When, you know, we put—take off the cover, when we forget all about our teaching, that is heaven [laughs] for us. But it does not mean we do not want the cover. We want it. But when we enjoy the Buddhism, there must be no[t] any teaching—there must not be any teaching. We are all same. So if a teacher whacks you, you can whack you too [laughs]. You can fight with teacher if you like, if you can enjoy that [laughs, laughter]. But still [?] teacher like me will—will not be enjoyable [laughs]. But if I am big, like Philip [Wilson]—

Philip Wilson: Hit you [?].

Suzuki-rōshi: —it may be pretty interesting [laughter]. Here we have no teaching. That is our ideal world. That is our heaven, nirvāna, where there is no teaching.

Student W: If there's no such thing as killing and death, why do we say, you know, "Don't eat meat because you have to kill animals"?

Suzuki-rōshi: Why? Because you kill [laughs, laughter]. You [1 word] kill.

Student W: But there's no such thing as killing, though.

Suzuki-rōshi: Mm-hmm.

Student W: So if we—

Suzuki-rōshi: If everyone understand it, we will not say so. But because you—just because you say you kill, you know, you try to kill people.

Student W: But if you don't think that way, you can eat meat with a peaceful mind. If you eat meat, if you kill an animal, but if you don't think about killing, then you can eat meat peaceful [1-2 words].

Suzuki-rōshi: Everyone like that. So our ideal is, you know, to enjoy our life in the common bath. But if someone fight [laughs] in the bath, we should say, "Don't do that. Don't disturb me." That is impossible. That is, you know, quite natural.

Student O: Is it—is it so, Sensei, that you—there is such a thing as a certifying or a certificate, because I think people are interested here about [3-6 words]. [Laughter.]

Suzuki-rōshi: We—if you are too much interested in such things, that is not Buddhism. If you are forced to be a teacher, you should be [laughs], but—or else, it is much better than to be no one.

Student O: [2-3 sentences unclear: The student seems to be continuing his question about certification of a Zen master.]

Suzuki-rōshi: Go to Japan and find out [laughs, laughter].

Student X: Well, in judo if you're good you get a black belt, so— [laughter].

Suzuki-rōshi: No—Zen is not physical training. Zen is not sport [laughs, laughter].

Oh, thank you very much.

Source: City Center original tape. Verbatim transcript by Diana Bartle and Bill Redican (7/30/01).