

It is so that religion is a cultural-social phenomena as well as a personal experience. But even if one is concerned with societal ills within religion or other aspects of social life, religion should be through and through personal.

One should not follow the dictates of his culture like a docile sheep; but it is also unhealthy to feel disdain for one's society, and just to mouth noble platitudes while neglecting one's own real problem. If a man acts upon his notions of the "correct society" without working to solve his own dilemmas, he adds to his own and the society's problems.

True religion is within ourselves. Buddha nature being the same in all of us, when we various humans feel religion we feel the same. If you feel in yourself the truth of Buddha's teachings, that is live 'inhaling' Buddhism. Exhaling Buddhism becomes really possible, i.e., telling your friends of your feelings of truth, of the reality and reasonableness of Buddha's teachings, etc.

If we want to really help someone, we should have some experience ourselves.

QUESTIONS

"Nothingness" is when we practice zazen in a concentrated yet natural and easy manner. Nothing is being in perfect harmony with all of our activity; if we were walking, it would mean harmonious consciousness of the feel of the floor, movement of the limbs, breathing, etc.

There is no inborn Buddha. There is no natural Buddha. Similarly we humans cannot be "natural" without sincere practice. Also you cannot have nothingness without practice.

As long as we live we cannot avoid being dualistic. So, on one side we are all fools. When we realize this, we are enlightened. When we make efforts in the face of this, we are Bodhisattvas.

This transcript is a retyping of the existing City Center transcript. It is not verbatim. The City Center transcript was entered onto disk by Jose Escobar, 1997. No tape is available. It was reformatted by Bill Redican (10/26/01).