

everything
changes

Transiency

" The basic teaching of how to live in this world is to accept the truth of transiency and find pleasure in suffering. "

The basic teaching of Buddhism is the teaching of transiency, or change. That everything changes ^{is} if the basic truth for each existence; no one can deny this truth, and all the teaching of Buddhism is condensed within it. This is the teaching for all of us, and wherever we go this teaching is true. This teaching is also interpreted as the teaching of selflessness. Because each existence is in constant change there is no abiding self; in fact, the self-nature of each existence is nothing but to change itself, which is the self-nature of all existence. There is no special separate self-nature for each existence. And this teaching is also called the teaching of nirvana. When we realize the everlasting truth of 'everything changes' and find our composure in it, we find ourselves in nirvana.

With^{out} accepting the fact that everything changes, we cannot find perfect composure. But unfortunately, although it is true, it is difficult for us to accept it. Because we cannot accept the truth of transiency, we suffer. So the cause of suffering is our non-acceptance of this truth. The teaching of the cause of our suffering, and the teaching that everything changes are thus two sides of one coin. Subjectively, from our human standpoint, the teaching of transiency is the cause of

our suffering. But objectively this teaching is simply the basic truth that everything changes. Dogen Zengi said, " Teaching which does not sound like it is forcing something on you is not true teaching ". The teaching itself is true, and in itself does not force anything upon you, but because of our human tendency we accept the teaching as if the teacher were forcing something on us. But whether we feel good or bad about it, this truth exists. If nothing exists, this truth does not exist. Buddhism exists because of each particular existence.

We should find the perfect existence through the imperfect existence. We should find perfection in imperfection. For us, complete perfection is not different from imperfection. The eternal exists because of non-eternal existence. In Buddhism it is a heretical view to expect something outside this world. We do not seek for something besides ourselves. We should find the truth in this world, through our difficulties, through our suffering. This is the basic teaching of Buddhism. Pleasure is not different from difficulty. Good is not different from bad. Bad is good; good is bad. They are two sides of one coin. So enlightenment should be in practice. That is the right understanding of practice, and the right understanding of our life. So to find pleasure in suffering is the only way to accept the truth of transiency. Without realizing how to accept this truth you cannot live in this world. Even though you try to escape

from it your effort will be in vain. If you think there is some other way to accept the eternal truth that everything changes, that is your delusion. This is the basic teaching of how to live in this world. Whatever you may feel about it, you have to accept it; you have to make this kind of effort.

So until we become strong enough to accept difficulty as pleasure we have to continue this effort. Actually, if you become honest enough, or straightforward enough, it is not so difficult to accept this truth. You can change your way of thinking a little bit. It is difficult, but this difficulty will not always be the same. Sometimes it will be difficult, and sometimes it will not be so difficult. If you are suffering you will have some pleasure in the teaching that everything changes. When you are in trouble, it is quite easy to accept the teaching. So why don't you accept it at other times? It is the same thing. Sometimes you may laugh at yourself, discovering how selfish you are. But no matter how you feel about this teaching, it is very important for you to change your way of thinking and accept the truth of transiency.