

The Great Way is in Front of the Door

BY ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN

On June 16 we held an opening ceremony for our new home. On this occasion Zen Master Seung Sahn delivered the following Dharma message:

(Striking the table) Form is emptiness, emptiness is form.

(Striking the table) No form, no emptiness.

(Striking the table) Form is form, emptiness is emptiness. Which one of these is correct? If you make a choice, I will hit you thirty times. If you do not make a choice, I will hit you thirty times. Why? **KATZ!!!** Three times three equals nine.

Thank you very much for coming to this opening ceremony. But what is it that brought your body here? Is it your mind? What is mind? Where is it? What is its shape? Mind is no mind. A mountain does not proclaim, "I am a mountain!" A river does not say, "I am a river!" All names and all forms are made by thinking. Thus, mind is no mind. All things have name and form. Names and forms come from emptiness and will return to emptiness. Thus, form is emptiness, emptiness is form.

When you are thinking, your mind, my mind, and all people's minds are different. If you cut through all thinking, your mind, my mind, and all people's minds are the same. The mind that cuts through all thinking is the true empty mind. The true empty mind is before thinking. Your substance is before thinking. Your substance is universal substance. Before thinking, there is no speech and no language. There is no God, no Buddha, no mountains, no rivers, no things at all. Thus, no form, no emptiness.

But, "before thinking" is truly just like this. No form, no emptiness is itself a clinging to emptiness. Put it down! Then, you will have no inside and no outside; you will attain the Absolute. Everything that you see, hear, taste, and smell is the truth. God is God, Buddha is Buddha, mountains are mountains, rivers are rivers. The truth is like this. Form is form, emptiness is emptiness.

If you cut through all thinking, your mind will become clear. Just that is your true self. Thinking is desire, desire is suffering. When the mind remains clear, there is no life and no death. You will find true freedom that has no hindrance.

Your body has life and death, but your true self transcends both life and death. Today we have an opening ceremony. This is the opening of the mind's door, the attainment of one's true self, and the discovery of the Great Way.

What, then, is one's true self? Does it exist or does it not? If you say that it exists, where is it? If you say that it does not, what is hearing this speech? Both of these answers are not complete. Why?

(Striking the table) **KATZ!!!**

Put it down, put it all down!

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