

## Judgements

Rev. Master Kōten

Just because some seem to fail or become scared, some turn around and run away or some are hesitant as to the value of pursuing the spiritual path says nothing about the value of the path itself. That can only be determined by the individuals themselves.

The proof of the path is in the walking of the path and not in anybody's speculation about it - only we can know if it is good for us.

That is why the Buddhist path cannot be understood from outside but only through practice of meditation and precepts - faith in something more and greater than the ordinary, confused, suffering mind and doing something about it.

In following the Buddha's teaching we have to look deeper than what is just in front of us and not be satisfied with ordinary answers. Therefore our viewpoint must be different from the ordinary one.

Dōgen says that we must praise those who exhibit virtue and feel sorry for those who do not and Rev. Master Jiyu said that there are always Buddhas who teach us what not to do.

To the ordinary mind there is a vast difference between the good, the innocent, the blameless (usually ourselves and those we love) versus the bad, the guilty and those who are to blame (usually other people and those whom we dislike.) The viewpoint of the Buddha Dharma is different:

"We're the origins of war, not history's forces nor the times nor justice nor the lack of it nor causes nor religions nor ideas nor kinds of government nor any other things - we are the killers; we breed war.....

For the love of God, can't we love each other just a little? That's how peace begins. We have so much to love each other for. We have such possibilities, my children, we could change the world". (1)

"When I found out what my real question was I knew that I had no alternative but to go on with my training for what had really brought me to a monastery was not why death and cruelty existed but why I was as I was. Death and cruelty were in me just as much as they had been in Hitler's S.S. troops and I knew that the real reason for my going to the East was because I wanted to do something about myself and I knew that I was willing to put up with anything in order to change". (2)

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(1) Eleanor of Aquitaine from the play "The Lion in Winter"

(2) The Wild White Goose - Introduction by Rev. Master Jiyu