

## Zoom Zazen Saturday 13 May 2023

Our understanding of the Way can be perfect; our meditation can take us into the space of no-thought or the *non-abiding*; we can be spiritually fulfilled, but we need, however, to *"go ahead and engage in the practice,"* says Master Wanshi.

The Buddhas cannot awaken in our place [on our behalf].

If we have a strong aspiration for Awakening, then we must absolutely engage in Awakening. It is simply holding oneself immobile in the heart of a *presence to oneself* that is both living and vibrant. We must make the distinction between [merely] wanting to go ahead and actually getting on with it, between talking about Buddhist practice and [actually] engaging in practice. Simply!

Let us be as determined and brave as Shantideva who wrote in *"The Journey towards Awakening"*:

*"I, who was born into the human race and can distinguish between right and wrong - why should I not attain Awakening if I don't give up on practice."*

This is also a statement that all masters repeat over and over again.

*"It is from our practice alone that realisation is born,"* says Master Dogen. *"Our real treasure is not found outside. Realisation is achieved through practice."*

It is a question of faith which Master Wanshi, too, insists upon. Simply to go ahead and implement our practice. This is as much about our meditation as it is about how we engage in our day-to-day activity. For this, he gives us a series of tips and indications:

*"Empty and quiet, in luminous stillness, understand deeply first. If your stillness does not suit you and you aspire to go beyond birth and death, know that there is no such place. Advance bravely through everything and you will then be able to confirm your understanding without a speck of dust creeping into your thoughts, and you will be penetrated by purity without the slightest cause for anxiety."*

*"Take a step back, keeping the hands open, letting go of everything. This is what allows you to understand exactly what birth and death is. That is when you radiate and respond to the ten thousand things. Be in total unity with them."*

*"Everywhere is the right place. So we are told, from ancient times until now, that no dharma, no phenomenon is hidden. They are all apparent in indisputable evidence."*

Simply give up everything. This is, in fact, Master Wanshi's real advice.

But how do we do this? How do we make it a reality? Let us listen to the Buddha:

*"My teaching does not require anyone to leave home or to leave the world, but it does require everyone to free themselves from the illusion of being a permanent self and to give up - without any regret - their thirst for pleasure. It is with your whole heart that you must commit yourself, with energy, and if you have to struggle, you must do so without envy or hatred. You must live the life of truth and not the life of the 'self' and [then] bliss will enter your heart."*

Living the life of truth can only be accomplished by abiding in the *Presence* that can never be grasped, the *non-abiding*. Truth cannot be attained using the *'thinking-mind'* - it's beyond it, as it desperately seeks to grasp and control everything. [Truth] is a *Presence* that has neither before nor after, the *'present of the present'*. That's the reason that the masters call it the *non-abiding*.

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