

[認理歸真]道是什麼?~~02

Tao is the source of all creation which arises above all individual things and persons. Tao is the Great Truth. And the truth found in a human being is but his True Self. True Self is absolute purity of character (the original nature of man). Nature is what Heaven has endowed in all things and what they have received from Heaven. Original nature is an all-pervading perfection not contrasted with evil. This is true of what Heaven has endowed in the Self. When man acts in accord with it, there is goodness. When man acts out of accord with it, there is evil. Although the nature remains tranquil, but if we do not know how to preserve it, it will not attain the Mean. Now, the nature should necessarily be cold and fire be hot. But the Mean is sometimes not attained because man loses his original nature and beclouds it by habits engendered by material force. It is not that nature fails to attain the Mean. Nature is the concrete substance of what man receives from Heaven.

The basic nature of all living beings, sages and ordinary people alike is equal. It is perpetual, perfectly still, and pure. However, the basic nature of an ordinary person is covered, like ore in a gold mine, whereas sages through practice, dig out from basic nature from deep down under the subjectively biased mind. The basic nature is Buddha-nature.

The common people have it in daily use but are unaware of it, with the result that the Tao of man of moral intelligence is seldom found. Whilst it is revealed in human heartedness, its functioning is in secret, stimulating the myriad creatures but without creating the anxieties which the sages endured. How prolific is the virtue of this and how great the achievement! The abundance of it is what is indicated by the term 'great achievement' and the daily renewal of it by the term 'prolific virtue'

It is impossible for ordinary people to be separated from the Tao for a moment. All men at all times have their feet on the way but the point is that they do not know that this is so. They are using it daily without knowing that it is the Way. Amongst men, there are none who do not eat and drink, but there are few who appreciate flavours. The function of spiritual culture is to enable men to appreciate that the Way is one which it is impossible for them to leave for a moment, to appreciate that their feet are at all times in the Way; or to use a metaphor, to enable men to be aware of the flavour. The Way, by its intrinsic nature, is one which cannot be left for a moment: man, by its intrinsic nature, at all times has his feet in the Way. Speaking from this angle, there is no necessity for the Way to be constructed, but speaking from the angle of man's conscious knowledge, the Way does need construction. Unless there be spiritual personality (te) at its highest, the highest (result of) of the Way cannot be consolidated. The man who fulfils all the requirements of his human nature, he possesses spiritual personality at its highest, that is the Tao at its highest, Thus, although from the angle of ordinary following of the Tao there is no need of construction, from the angle of the Tao at its highest there is need. This Way is what many men are already practising, it is ordinary. It is also what they cannot leave for a moment, and therefore it is invariable. Sage men walk this road and also fulfil his highest requirements.