

November 2005

Issue No: 5



Monthly News letter of *The Triple Gem Of The North*

Weekly Meditation

Monday Evening

6.30 PM to 8.00 PM

At

Unitarian Universality Fellowship

937 Charles Ave.,

Mankato, MN 56001

Call Tricia@ 507-524 -3245

Friday Evening

6.00 PM to 7.30 PM

Sutra Studies

7.30 PM to 8.00 PM

At

Heartwood Mindfulness

Center

3706 E 34th St,

Minneapolis

Call Ray@ 612-760-3996

Saturday Morning

8.30 AM to 10.00 AM

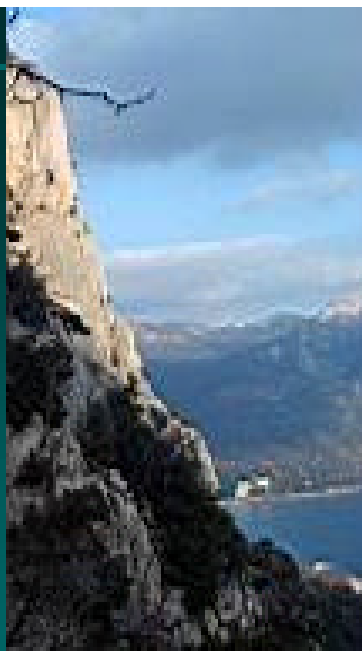
At

Chanhassen Recreation

Center

Chanhassen, MN

Call Carol@ 952-380-0235



Generation Zen

When we compare our self with others, which we often do, it is important to understand the role of our ego-centric thoughts. Many people are “put off” when someone younger offers advice. As a result, sometimes we do not respect a young person’s idea even if they are intelligent and practical. We equate wisdom and experience with age.

We do this not only in our ordinary life, but also in our path to the spiritual life. As a result, we are unwilling to be open minded to new valuable teachings. For example, when Lord Buddha, the Awakened One, returned to his birth city of Kapilavastu after being enlightened his young relatives and other young people came forward to pay their respect. However many of the elderly relatives refused because they did not want to bow or pay respect to this young (in years) person who claims that he became the Buddha. Therefore, Lord Buddha had to take other steps to gain their attention so they would be open to his teachings.

We tend to listen to older spiritual advisors over younger ones because we make the connection that the time we spend on this earth is directly tied to how far we have traveled down the spiritual path. We measure and judge the advisors knowledge based on time and not on true wisdom. Even Lord Buddha proved to his family that this way of measuring knowledge and attainment of skills is wrong.

What we have to understand is that it does not matter how long we have been following this path, but how well we understand the teaching. Lord Buddha taught us that to gain wisdom and become awakened is not dependent on the concept of time.

Some of his examples help us to find the right path. One time he compared his teachings, or “Dhamma” to a boat that helps us cross a river. Buddha pointed out no one will carry the boat on their shoulders after crossing the river to pay respect to the boat thinking that “Oh, this boat helped me to cross over this river, therefore I must respect it”. Dhamma similarly is to be used as a vessel to cross the “Samsara” (wheel of life) and to put a stop to our fragile existence. However, we should leave the boat on the other side and not carry it on our shoulders as we leave “samsara”.

Another important lesson Buddha mentioned is to hold and use Dhamma in a proper way. Buddha pointed out that Dhamma also could be as risky as holding a poisoned snake. He said an expert usually holds a snake by the neck, but a less knowledgeable person may hold the snake by its tale, which allows the snake to turn back easily and bite the less knowledgeable person. Similarly, we should hold Dhamma properly through humility; otherwise, it also has the potential to harm us.

Buddha understood the importance of humbleness for the seeker of wisdom.

— **Bhante Sathi** —

Man To Superman(part 11)

In order to understand the evolution of 'civilized man' to the level of 'super man' it is useful to examine the evolution of religion. The different religions that we find in the world today are different forms of organized religion. Organized religion does not help individuals to fully evolve because the individuals remain bound to dogmas and rituals, and are not free to evolve. Natural religion is a process of individual evolution. There are four main levels of individual religious evolution.

They are:

1. The Saddha level (devotion)
2. The Sila (discipline)
3. The Samadhi (tranquility)
4. The Panna (understanding)

At the saddha level we appreciate what is good and true. This may be expressed in the form of worship of a perfect being who is perfect in goodness and wisdom, what ever be the name one may call Him. Religion is practiced at this level in the form of devotion. It is the devotional level of practice. At this level, man becomes orientated to seek inner perfection. He begins the journey towards civilization.

Religion at the sila level is where one begins to practice the good life, or good principles of behaviour, which are socially beneficial. It is at this level that one begins to practice commandments or precepts. This is the level of self-discipline where one begins to control natural emotional impulses and thereby learn to control selfishness. At this level, therefore, we learn to cultivate an interest in others or all beings. It is at this level that civilized man is born. This sila level of religious practice produces civilized man.

The third samadhi level is the level of renunciation and meditation. At this level one gives up all worldly pursuit, sensual pleasures and possessions and takes to meditation. This may also be called the mystic level. Most mystical states described in various religions, fall under this category of practice. In Buddhism this level is called the samadhi level. All the jhanas and samadhis are practiced at this level. At this level one begins to experience inner peace and happiness which is superior to the excitement of sensual pleasures. At this level, one also begins to experience psychic powers by which one's mind has control over matter. More over, the senses become more acute at this stage, and the brain more proficient. This is the stage at which man becomes 'super man' (uttari-manussa)

The last or the fourth stage of the evolution of religion is what is called the pañña level. At this level there is the direct awareness of the reality of experience. It is at this level that man becomes fully aware of the problem of existence and its solution. It is at this level that man becomes an 'extra ordinary individual' (ariya puggala). This is a stage higher than the level of super man'. It is at this level that man 'awakens' to the reality of life, and ends the process of evolution. It is the final evolutionary stage. It is the stage of the "Awakened One" or the Buddha.

These four evolutionary levels of religion are levels that every individual has to pass through during the course of human evolution. This evolution is an evolution of consciousness or a maturity of consciousness. Religion seen in this way, is concerned with individuals, rather than organizations or Churches. When an individual evolves from one stage to another the views and lifestyles change. Organized religions tend to prevent such change and therefore obstruct the evolutionary process. Religion that I refer to and which I call natural religion, is a process of growth. It could also be called a growth technique by means of which an individual consciously evolves from a lower to a higher level of consciousness.

happiness, through excitement and sensory stimulation. Just as civilized man wields superior powers and attains greater success than uncivilized man, by means of his better tool making ability, machinery and better organizing techniques. In the same way, 'superman' enjoys greater powers than civilized man due to his more developed psychic powers.

At the level of superman (uttari manussa) an individual experiences a higher level of happiness and peace beyond the ordinary human experience. This is why it is called the 'super human experience' (uttari manussa dhamma). It is an experience which is both cognitively and affectively different and better than the ordinary human experience of the uncivilized as well as civilized man. Just as the civilized man's experience is superior to that of the uncivilized man, because the social experience is better and more pleasant than the anti-social alienated selfish experience; in the same way, the super-man's experience of inner peace is superior to the civilized man's experience of The psychic powers possessed by superman are described in the Nikayas and are called the five super knowledge's (pancabhinna). The levels of inner peace experienced by superman are also described in the Nikayas. They are called the Eight Attainments of Equilibrium (attha samapatti). These five super knowledge's together with the eight attainments of equilibrium are regarded as super human experiences (uttari manussa dhamma) by the Buddha. Therefore one who has evolved to this level of experience is truly a Super-man according to the teaching of the Buddha. Even modern thinkers would agree that if a person possess such powers he should be undoubtedly super human. It is because they do not believe that human beings could possess such powers that they prefer to regard them as myth rather than fact. They have, however, ignored the possibility of 'superman'. They cannot deny the fact that these stories about Superman are not just stories. They are a description of the results of the practice of a technique of conscious evolution which could be tested by anyone who has the courage to try the experiment.

(vedana), its arising and its cessation; seeing perception (sanna), its arising and its cessation; seeing reactions (sankhara), their arising and their cessation; seeing cognition (vinnana) its arising and its cessation. Buddha analyses experience into these five aggregates (pancakkhanda). These five aggregates which are the constituent parts of experience, ordinary man tends to identify as parts of the 'self'. They are personalized and thus regarded as 'mine' and 'myself'. It is by personalizing these aggregates of the constituents of experience that we come into being (bhava), that we see ourselves as existing. When these aggregates or constituents of experience are seen to be born and are seen to decay and die, we tend to think that we are born, we are decaying and we are dying. As a result we experience anxiety.

Half Day Retreat– Chanhassen

Date; December 17th 2005

Where; Chanhassen

More info go to www.triplegem.org

New Year Blessing ceremony

Will have in Mankato, Chanhassen and Minneapolis , for more Info check website

Voice Of Wisdom

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"Where Aer You Going"

Zen teachers train their young pupils to express themselves. Two Zen temples each had a child protégé. One child, going to obtain vegetables each morning, would meet the other on the way.

"Where are you going?" asked the one.

"I am going wherever my feet go," the other responded.

This reply puzzled the first child who went to his teacher for help. "Tomorrow morning," the teacher told him, "when you meet that little fellow, ask him the same question. He will give you the same answer, and then you ask him: 'Suppose you have no feet, then where are you going?' That will fix him."

The children met again the following morning.

"Where are you going?" asked the first child.

"I am going wherever the wind blows," answered the other.

This again nonplussed the youngster, who took his defeat to his teacher.

"Ask him where he is going if there is no wind," suggested the teacher.

The next day the children met a third time.

"Where are you going?" asked the first child.

"I am going to the market to buy vegetables," the other replied.



Triple Gem of the North Is a 501 (C) 3 approved tax-deductible Non- profit organization based in state of Minnesota. We operate in Minneapolis, St Paul, Chanhassen , St Peter and Mankato. Your tax-deductible contribution will assist in our endeavor to serve the community through weekly meditation classes, day long retreats and the assistance in building a permanent retreat center. Triple Gem is also heavily involved in various disaster relief efforts such as Tsunami relief in Sri Lanka, and Hurricane Katrina. This is done in the spirit of the teachings of the Buddha.