

Grand Faith



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In his short essay, Sandó Kaisen addresses the role of faith in the tradition of Japanese Sōtō Zen Buddhism and its centrality for the practice of Zazen.

Most people go astray in sterile thoughts of the mind, imagining spirituality based on morals, discipline, and achievement of various goals, and being persuaded that this means “to walk the grand Way of the Patriarchs of the past”. However, their Heart is not pure enough to reach the grand Reality and achieve liberation from all suffering. Because, Heart can be reached through Heart, not through exercises or mental thoughts. All those new meditations that attract so many people are nothing but ephemeral practices, which only add confusion to illusions already well anchored.

The Grand Way does not depend on anything that is human. It does not depend on kindness, nor concentration, nor morals, nor merits, and above all not on meditation technique.

It is not enough just to sit down. We have to sit down with faith in the Spirit. If this faith is absent, the Heart cannot be reached.

In the old days, warriors died with faith. In reality, they did not die, because Heart is not from this world. As long as we do not reach the Heart, we remain ordinary beings subject to the vagaries of ideas and convictions purely human. We are thus at the mercy of those who have learned to chain others to better possess them and take their money. The world is full of imposters with beautiful mouths and words learned, brilliant, and logical, who take humble, affable and smiling attitudes.

The reason, philosophy, techniques of well-being and perfect meditations of present day have been right for those who walk beside their Heart without ever knowing it.

People only feed their egoism without even realizing it.



About the author

Sandó Kaisen (1952) is one of the main representatives of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Europe. He has been publicly active since 1990 through his books, lectures, as well as TV and radio appearances.

We protect ourselves, we save ourselves, we cowardly hide our fears to better appear in the eyes of others – liberated, wise and tranquil. But no one can escape the Eye of the Heart. We can continue lying to ourselves and lying to the others, but there will come a time when we will have to inevitably face ourselves. Lamentation, regrets or crying will then be of no use.

If the Heart is full of all the human vanities that we ourselves have created, the earth and the sky remain forever separated.

Penetrating the Heart of the Way does not depend on us, but on the extraordinary faith that animates us.

And this faith depends on great determination and great desire to reach the Heart.