

Let's Talk About the Meaning of Life

[FOREWORD]

A person's life always includes bitterness as well as happiness. These two intermingle and manifest their presence throughout one's life. Now let's discuss just how bitter and happy a person's life can be.

1. Bitterness

A. Life's Most Bitter and Painful Encounters:

The greatest sadness in a person's life is to have a spiteful wife and unfilial son.

The most heinous thing is to have someone repay one's kindness with injury.

The greatest misery is to be in an extremely distressed state.

The most disheartening thing is for one's friends and family to abandon him.

The greatest frustration is to have success snatched from one's easy grasp.

The greatest regret is to let one's word or actions stray into wrong.

The most exhausting thing is to be under tremendous mental pressure.

All these are the most painful and bitter encounters of a person's life.

B. Life's Most Tragic Fates:

All of life's accumulated virtues can be destroyed by just one vice, just a person may be so involved in the pursuit of wealth that he forgets what is really important, or a bird in its ardent search for food is suddenly and unexpectedly seized by a predator. All such tragic instances are caused by greed. To bully others or to act as if the law were not existent, to be killed by unnatural disasters, war, and ruthless destruction - these are the most tragic fates of a person's life.

C. Life's Most Unavoidable Circumstances:

These are: the pain of unobtainableness, the pain of being separated from the ones you love most of all, the pain of feeling bitterness toward someone, illness, hunger, struggling for food, working hard for fame and profit, and anxiety about the burdens of family. These are the most unavoidable things in a person's life.

Have you seen all of these things in your lifetime? There are thus the usual experiences of this world and the constant rule of life.

2. Happiness

A. From the facts we have already talked about, we can sense the warmth and also the coldness between people. Thus to be one who wishes to cultivate oneself according to Tao, he must be this way: make oneself feel happy even when in a very bitter environment, and accept all very undesirable conditions. One must also turn his knowledge into wisdom, sever confusion, learn from the Buddhas, wipe out Karma, and do good deeds. From the midst of the ever changing world seek the unchanging Truth, form the midst of "no-self" (physical self) seek the "true self", then reach toward the goal of self-enlightenment, the enlightenment of others, and for that which will profit others as well as oneself.

We should also do the following: although the sentient beings of this world are uncountable, we should vow to help them all pass beyond the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, so that they can someday return to Heaven; vow to cease one's endless worries and vexations; vow to cultivate oneself though there may be no end to such a road; and vow to achieve what Buddhas have achieved though the goal may seem very lofty. One should have an awareness of the impermanent and the phenomenal world but not emphasize the material life, be eager in one's pursuit of Truth, be willing to sacrifice oneself in order to serve the people, have a strict demand toward one's cultivation, and view one's fellow cultivators as equal to oneself. The one may reach for the perfection of his personality, and become a virtuous person without faults or vices. In this way one's whole life won't pass by in vain.

B. A person who wishes to cultivate himself should be this way : the ones who have the ability to help others should do so eagerly, the ones who have wealth should make donations and help people very generously, those who understand Tao clearly should teach others diligently, and those endowed with high morals should influence and reform others. So the happiest thing in the world is to do good deeds, to help others, and to have a satisfied mind

The great Saint Mencius said, " The man of perfect virtue has three sources of happiness: that his parents and siblings are still living, he feels righteout even before God, and he surrounds himself with talented people and is able to educate them". These are the delights that the virtuous men desire.

That which will bring about the most consolation is to be completely loyal, to do one's filial duty, to do one's duty completely, to achieve one's own mission in life, to have a purposeful life, and to make worthwhile sacrifices.

[FUTURE GOALS]

From now on all of you must prevent evil from penetrating your minds, do not refuse Truth, make the devil your enemy but do not make people into your enemies.

Teacher wishes that you all cultivate yourselves according to Tao with your true heart, and to work for Tao in the same way, such will not allow God's mercy or Teacher's hardwork to be in vain.