

Roshi: "A true person of the Dharma" includes everyone, regardless if they've made the Dharma their own or not, or whether they've experienced satori or not. This is to say that we are only able to perceive the past and the future. What is the present which divides past and future? "Now" or the present is impossible to perceive. There is no so-called "now", no instant which you can say is "now". This is exactly what we explain with the Word "Dharma". This means that something which cannot actually be perceived is simply explained as the Dharma so at least we can perceive it intellectually. To grasp the Dharma, then, means for the self to assimilate something which doesn't exist. We can only perceive the past and the future and yet certainly there is the present even if it isn't possible to know it. It's not there and yet it is, the moment "now".

Announcer: We usually think we understand "now".

Roshi: But that is in the past. To understand something creates a distance. Because there is a distance, we can see something. If we can't see something it is because there is no distance between it. This means we are one with it. The condition of being one with things is explained as the Dharma.

Announcer: That means that we are within the Dharma.

Roshi: Yes.

Announcer: The Dharma itself.

Roshi: To sit and realize, "yes, that's the way it is", that is what we call satori. This means there is no one who is not liberated. It is simply a question of whether you realize it or not. This means that there is no one who cannot awaken by practicing according to the correct teaching. Satori is your own reality. Anyone can realize it.

Announcer: The Dharma itself... what interferences? What are the obstacles?

Roshi: In Buddhist terms, we say it is ignorance.

Announcer: ignorance, lack of clarity...

Roshi: Essentially all is one, Ignorance is to divide that into two. Subjective, objective. No one can think these two thoughts at the same time, subjective and objective. Or good and bad. Or like and dislike. No one can consciously think two things at the same time. But because we are changing so rapidly, we think we can think subjective and objective or good and bad at the same time. For that reason we compare. But in fact it isn't possible to compare. As long as one thought doesn't disappear, another new one can't appear. And yet it seems as if we can compare good and bad. This is the human condition.

Announcer: This sort of thinking, then, is delusion.

Roshi: That's right. It is the function of the ego. No one is born a buddha. We say everyone is a buddha, so this may sound contradictory. But without going through the process of ignorance and clarifying it, it isn't possible to understand that you are Buddha and an enlightened being.

Announcer: So we are endowed with Buddha nature at birth, but as human beings we are also born into a condition of ignorance.

Roshi: That's right. For example salt is these days manufactured from sodium nitrium, but formerly salt was refined from sea water on salt beds. Yet it isn't possible to use sea water to flavor food simply because it is salty. It must be refined into salt using appropriate procedures and then it can be used to season food. Without this process, it