

Questions for Reflection
Talk 3, Series 10

Here are some ideas for your reflection during the week:

- 1) First: If you lived in Ireland during these hundred years and knew all about the "Laundry" but you also knew that if you said anything, your livelihood would be crushed, your wife and family would be without subsistence and everyone would blame YOU for bringing this "child of low character" home to add to their troubles, what would YOU have done?

- 2) Second: When you consider what Kobun says--All beings return to nothing, offering their lives and making one moment possible. This is how we humans live, how vegetables live and die--he is basically proposing that WE are sacrificing our lives to the vegetables, e.g., for a vegetable, how the human who eats you lives out her life, is how your life is actualized. Usually we think just the opposite--that the food is sacrificed for us. Which view do you align with?

- 3) Third: Kobun says to his students: So many times we say "I" or "my" or "mine." There is something going on which makes it possible to say so. So when I pay attention to this "I" it is always the true self, in all attempts to express something. Basically he is saying that every single moment, in all of our behaviors regardless of how inept, we are always trying to express our true self. Do you agree? When you spill your glass of milk and shards are all over the floor, are you trying to express your true self?

- 4) Bodhidharma taught, "When you do not give rise to the idea of birth and extinction, this is called "No Killing Life." So this means that even the thought of killing, even having an idea of birth and death is a serious misunderstanding. Since this is an ultimate truth we are not able to grasp it with our minds, but can you grasp it with your body? Sit with it in zazen, holding it gently.

- 5) Fifth: The Third Truth, the truth of the Middle Way is not the conventional truth and not the ultimate truth but it's seeing conventional truths through the lens of ultimate truth. Can you give an example?