

Intimate : Koans & Awakening

June 28, 2008

Liangshan was the attendant for Master Tongan. Once when he brought Tongan his robe, Tongan asked, “What is that beneath *your* robe?”

Liangshan didn't respond. Tongan said, “It's so painful when you study Buddhism but don't know the answer to that yet. Now you ask me—I'll tell you.”

Liangshan asked, “What is that beneath your robe?”

Tongan said, “Intimate.”

Liangshan was immediately awakened. He made prostrations, and tears of gratitude wet his robe.

Tongan asked, “Now that you have had an awakening, can you express it?”

Liangshan said he could.

Tongan asked, “What is that beneath your robe?”

Liangshan replied, “Intimate.”

Tongan said, “Intimate, intimate.”



Dizang asked Fayan, “Where are you going?”

Fayan said, “I am wandering randomly.”

“What do you think of wandering?”

“I don't know.”

Dizang said, “Not knowing is most intimate,” and Fayan suddenly awakened.



Zhaozhou said, “The sky does not go into the world to teach.”



When Dongshan was ill, someone asked him, “You are unwell. Is there someone, after all, who is not sick?”

Dongshan said, “There is.”

“Does the one who is not sick nurse you?”

“I am nursing that one,” Dongshan replied.

“What's it like when you nurse that one?”

“Then I do not see that there is illness.”



Shishuang asked, “How do you step from the top of a hundred-foot pole?”

Another eminent teacher of the past said: “Although you sitting on top of a hundred-foot pole have entered the Way, it is not yet intimate. Take a step from the top of the pole and manifest your whole body in every direction.”