

**Shunryū Suzuki-rōshi**  
**1 PM *SESSHIN* LECTURE**  
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For a long time after Renaissance, you have forgotten the value of religion. You try to exchange religion for, you know, science and philosophy. You—you are Christian [laughs], but actually what you have been doing is to replace [laughs] science to religion—to exchange science. And you wanted to establish, you know, human culture, which is quite free from [laughs] authority of religion. You have quite good reason [laughs] in your effort to try to exchange or try to reform your culture before it is too dark [laughs]. Now it is too bright [laughs]. You went to the—too extreme, I think [laughs].

But recently, even though you have excellent—very advanced culture, but there is something—there is something which you don't know what to do—or that is your mind [laughs]. You don't know what to do with this mind. You have various tools, but you have no mind to use it [laughs]. That is your problem, I think. And we, you know, we Japanese people studied what is our mind [laughs], but we have enough tools [laughs], so we become attached to your civilization too much and almost forgetting what we have studied [laughing]. That is our problem just now. So combination of the two will create something wonderful, I think.

If I say, "Treat everything in right way," it looks—it will—it looks like very rigid and formal, but it is not so. This secret of Dōgen-zenji will work. Someone said Western people failed in creating their culture by ignoring true—ignoring religion. And Oriental people made a great mistake in abusing religion. The Buddhism is—was too handy, so they—we abused religion too much. So now we don't know what is true religion. Oriental religion is mixed up [laughs], you know. In—in India, in China, or in Korea, even in Japan, Buddhism is so handy that they use religion instead of medicine. They use religion instead of education, science, and every—our culture is based on Buddhism. That is too much for us [laughs]. And you abused [laughs] Buddhism—Oriental people abused Buddhism too much. When you abuse something, you know, the true original advantage will be lost. If you cut paper by razor, razor will—will be blunt? What do you say?

**Student:** Dull.

Dull—will not be sharp enough. So you should not use razor when you cut paper. That is why Dōgen-zenji emphasized the purity of the Buddhism—the religion. Religion should be pure and sharp always so that it can serve its original purpose, its own purpose. Leave every—

activity for some other people. We religious people should devote ourselves to the pure genuine religion. And we should keep religion always sharp enough to cut various entanglement completely.

This is why Dōgen worked so hard. And this is why I came here and why you are studying Buddhism in San Francisco, I think.

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Source: City Center original tape. Verbatim transcript by Judith Randall.  
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