

寻佛之行

Searching for Buddha



作者：晓子

Xiao-Zi

“那照您看，信教最大的好处是什麽？”我很想知道这位经历坎坷的老人，对自己的遭遇是怎麽看的。

“好处？”她看看我，不知该怎麽回答了。想了一会，她对我说，神跟人的关系最亲。你看圣经，神把自己比作父亲，又说教会是他的新娘，而且说耶稣是我们的朋友。神与人的亲密是父母、夫妻、朋友统统加起来这麽多。有什麽能比这更好的呢？

望著老太太的满脸皱纹，我突然明白基督教一直使我感到别扭的是什麽了：基督教不仅是道理，而且还包含感情。道理谁都不怕去探索，但感情意味著接受与付出，责任与信守，人却不是那麽轻易作出让步的。

“改头换面不动心”，也许，佛教给我最大的吸引力，就是我可以“不动心。”我可以去作许多行为上的工夫：吃斋化缘，念经修行，推究学问，这些都是我自己可以支配的，我不需要降低自己，进入与某一灵格位体相互沟通的感情关系。

但是如果没有感情的印证，人的信仰不可能成为改变生活的力量。就像眼前这位老太太，若与她的神不亲密，就不可能在这几十年的风雨中有依靠。

而佛教真的能给我这种感情上的印证吗？若不动心，行为真的能带来生命的改变吗？

看破之後

总而言之，这次寻佛之行，出乎意料，另有所获。日後每每与他人谈起佛教，我常常会想起六祖慧能的诗：

菩提本无树
明镜亦非台
本来无一物
何处惹尘埃

慧能作此诗回应神秀对佛的领悟。意思大概就是说，求佛应达到空的境界。但万物皆空之後，生命就没有重量了。所罗门王也说：“凡事都是虚空。”但在看空之後，他还有造天地的主，也因为有这位主，他的生命变得充实和完整。

在有幸能听到福音的今天，我们不应在古人悟空的境界中徘徊，应更进一步，在看破之後，找到那位赐出丰盛生命的真神。

菩提空无路
明镜显真台
若无蒙恩渡
处处惹尘埃

"What do you think is the greatest advantage in believing?" I really wanted to know how this old lady viewed her own difficult experiences and sufferings.

"Advantage?" She stared at me, lost for words. Then she told me that God was very close to her. In the Bible God likens himself to a Father; the church is his bride, and Jesus is our friend. So the close relationship between God and ourselves is comparable to our relationships with parents, between husband and wife and friends all put together. Nothing else even comes close.

Looking at this wrinkled old face, I suddenly understood something that had never previously occurred to me about Christianity: It is not only about truth, it is about compassion. Truth is something everybody can afford to pursue. But compassion requires receptivity and sacrifice, responsibility and faith. Human beings do not easily make such concessions.

"Their hearts are never touched." Perhaps Buddhism's greatest attraction was that I didn't have to have my heart touched. I could do all kinds of things like fasting, reading the scriptures, studying knowledge, all without having to lower myself to enter into a true relationship with a divine Being.

But, if there is no evidence of compassion, then our religion has never transformed our lives. If this old lady had not been so close to her Lord, she would never have known such support during her years of suffering.

Could Buddhism really provide me with this kind of testimony to compassion? If the heart is not touched, can 'good deeds' bring about true life transformation?

It dawns on me

To sum up, I reaped an unexpected harvest from my journey in search of the Buddha. Now whenever I discuss Buddhism with someone, I remember the Buddhist poem:

*The Bodhi tree is no tree;
the shining mirror is no mirror.
There is nothing to begin with;
where does dust come from?*

The poem is supposed to show the poet's understanding of the theory of emptiness. It teaches that Buddhism means emptiness. But when everything is empty, your life can bear no weight. King Solomon also talked about emptiness: "All is meaningless." But he still had his Lord, the Creator of Heaven and earth. And because of this Lord, Solomon's life was rich and complete.

Today we are fortunate in being able to hear the Gospel; we do not need to go wandering around as our forefathers did. We need only take one step to find the true God and the abundant life that He provides.

*The Bodhi tree leads to nowhere;
The shining mirror shows the true mirror.
Apart from the Lord's grace,
We'd be stuck in the dust.*

作者来自上海，原任大学英文教师，英美文学硕士。现住中国。

The author is from Shanghai. She taught English in college and went on to gain a Master's degree in English literature. She now lives in China.

http://www.oc.org/eng_txt/oc4424.htm

http://www.oc.org/gb_txt/oc4424.htm

Ahead of us walked a Tibetan family. From time to time they would all stop and fall prostrate to the ground, measuring their length in the mud.

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

"If we Chinese must have a religion, then it is Buddhism which seems easier for us to accept."

When I try to preach the Gospel to Chinese people, I am likely to get this kind of response. In fact back in 1991 when I went on a long journey in inner China, this was exactly my own mind-set. At the time, I was just beginning to switch from reading Buddhist books to reading the Bible and I had many questions. So I decided to travel, hoping that by visiting famous mountain shrines and Buddhist temples I could get my thoughts together.

What I really hoped for was that on my travels I might have some wonderful and inspiring encounters with Buddhism. How this would happen I had no idea. In my imagination, I could see some ancient sage with white eyebrows and bronze countenance, seated beside a raging waterfall, holding a cup out to me and helping me out of my confusion.

To my surprise, the trip started rather weirdly. Originally there were five or six of us preparing to go, some already Buddhists and some claiming to be atheists. I anticipated that we would be learning from one another or debating together on the way. But just as we were about to set off, some of the group fell sick and others had urgent business. In the end there was only one other person besides myself able to keep the commitment. So the two of us took the train inland. And this other person was a Christian.

Human suffering?

The first stop on our westward journey was the Qingzang Plateau. After going around the famous tourist attractions, we set out to areas further inland where very few tourists go. The deeper we penetrated into Tibetan territory, the more pervasive the religious atmosphere became. We saw black-robed monks meandering along the streets quietly moaning or uttering quiet sighs. Even the sheets on our hotel beds smelled of the grease in the lamps before the Buddhist altars. We followed the local Tibetans to their Lama Temple.

It was raining and the streets were muddy. Ahead of us was a Tibetan family. From time to time they would all stop, and fall prostrate to the ground, measuring their length in the mud. Then they would get up and go on. They did the same thing again and again. Their two small children, aged about five or six, stumbling along beside them, would one moment find themselves shoved down into a muddy puddle and the next picked up on to their feet again. The family wore long sweeping Tibetan robes, and as they went by they looked to us like a few tattered bundles of rags floating on a muddy sea.

那年风闻长江三峡工程一旦开工，鬼城即被淹没，游客更是见鬼心切，蜂拥而至。船一靠岸，但见鬼城旌旗招摇，香火冉冉；游客三五成群，脖子上挂著相机，包里兜著木鱼佛珠之类的旅游纪念品。大有今朝不见阎王府的惋惜之情。

我们同行的几个人也不甘落后，挤在一个小摊上购买佛香。讨价还价之后，与我一起的几个朋友买下了几柱香，跑进庙宇烧去了。只剩一个人在摊子上又挑了一个小香炉。正待付钱，摆摊的老太婆突然一口咬定我的几个朋友还没付钱，要我如数付清。我明明看见他们付了钱才走的，当然不依，就和她吵起来。这老太婆也是骗惯的，不一会儿就招了几个当地小贩过来，将我团团围住，非要我交了钱才让走。我见斗不过，只好气愤愤地掏了腰包。

这一折腾，把我游鬼城的兴致全给搅了。这鬼城的存在，本是要劝人弃恶行善；想不到天天面对鬼城讨生计的人，居然这么无动於衷，迷醉三涂！

正忿忿然之际，只见我那位信主的同伴跑过来，手里拿著根冰棍，一脸激动。“巧遇！真是巧遇！”他说。

原来他刚才去买冰棍，与卖冰棍的老太太攀谈起来，得知老太太也是个基督徒，文革时被批斗，老伴被逼成了神经病。她一直照顾老伴，卖冰棍挣钱糊口。

我一听就起了好奇心，忙要他指点，沿路寻过去，果然看见有个老太太在树荫底下，笑盈盈地叫卖。我也买了根冰棍，和她聊起来。我对刚才发生的事还耿耿於怀，就半开玩笑地问：“老太太，您信教，是不是怕死了会下地狱？”

“人要是不知道神，下地狱有什么怕不怕的？”老太太回答得很利索，她用手指指周围：“你看这么多人，有几个给鬼城吓住了？烧烧香，拜拜佛，意思意思，改头换面不动心呐！”

“基督教不也劝人行善吗？和佛教是一样的啊。”我又追问她。

“那不一样，”她连连摆手，“拜佛行善是先给自己超渡啊。我们信主的蒙神恩典，靠耶稣得永生，光作好事赚不来的。”

But recent news was that the City of Demons was soon to be washed away as a result of the Gorges Dam construction project. So that year the city had become a great tourist attraction. As our boat moored at the jetty, we saw that the whole city was full of banners and burning incense. There were tourists everywhere, with cameras around their necks and their bags stuffed with souvenirs.

Our party didn't want to be left out, so we gathered around a street peddler to buy incense. After some intense bargaining, my friends bought some incense sticks and headed off in the direction of the temple to burn them. I was left alone with the peddler and was buying an incense burner from her. But when I came to pay for it, the peddler started insisting that my friends hadn't paid for the incense they had bought and to demand that I should pay for it all. But I could clearly remember them paying for what they had bought. So I refused and started arguing with her. But the peddler was a very skilled adversary. Before I realized it, some other peddlers had come over and were surrounding me, refusing to let me leave. I was helpless, and in the end I had to give in.

This bad experience took away all my excitement about the city. I had thought that the purpose of the City of Demons was to convert the wicked. So I found it hard to understand, then, how these peddlers who faced the City every day could be so indifferent about good and evil!

I was still feeling angry when my Christian companion ran over to me, an ice cream stick in her hand. "What a coincidence!" she exclaimed.

She said she had gone to buy an ice cream and began to chat with the old lady who was selling ice creams. She found out that the old lady was also a Christian, who had suffered a great deal during the Cultural Revolution. Her husband was very ill and she had to make a living by selling ice creams.

I became curious and asked her to take me to meet her. Very soon we spotted this smiling old lady under a big tree, selling ice-creams. I went over and bought one and began to chat with her. Still mindful of my recent bad experience I asked her, half-jokingly, "Granny, do you believe in Christianity because you are afraid of going to hell after you die?"

"If you don't know about God, what do you have to be afraid of?" the old lady retorted. She pointed at to people around us, "You see all those people there? How many of them really fear the gods? They burn incense and they worship the Buddha. But it is nothing more than a formality. Their hearts are never touched."

"But Christianity also teaches about morality, doesn't it? Isn't that the same as Buddhism?" I asked again.

"No, it is quite different," she said, "To worship the Buddha is to try to ensure a good next life for yourself. We believe in the Lord and that we gain eternal life by the Lord's grace and through Jesus, not because of our own deeds."

一家藏族人拖儿带女走在我们前面，每走几步，就停下来，俯倒在地上，用整个身躯丈量出一段距离。

“天下人间，没有赐下别的名，我们可以靠著得救”（《徒》4:12）。

“作为中国人，如真的要信一种宗教，还是佛教更容易接受。”

每每向周围的中国人传福音时，都会得到这样的回答。其实在 1991 年间，我也正是带著这样的想法，在国内作了一次长途旅行。当时我从看佛书，刚刚转向读圣经，心里有很多解不开的结，便想藉旅行，走访名山佛寺，理清一下自己的思路。

当时我心里暗暗希冀的，是能碰上奇机妙缘，得个大彻大悟。具体是怎麽看破，我也说不上来，总之，大概像松涛之下，一位雪目铜颜之长者，清茶一壶，指点迷津之类的转折。

不想旅途一开始，就有点“异兆。”当初相约同行的，有五六个朋友，有信佛的，也有坚守无神论的，本可以彼此切磋，大战一场。不料临行之前，病的病，有事的有事，最後能信守诺言与我一同坐上西行列车的，只有一个，是个基督徒。

婆娑之苦？

我们西行的第一站是青藏高原。把几个明显的旅游胜地都走了一遍之後，我们就向游客稀少的内陆区进发。越深入藏族人的区域，气氛就越发浓重起来。以绛黑裹身的和尚，在街上如沉默的感叹号缓缓飘过，连旅店的床单都散发出佛坛前长明灯的酥油味道。我们也跟著当地的藏人去喇嘛寺。

我们去的那天，天正下著雨，路上泥浆翻滚。一家藏族人拖儿带女走在我们前面，每走几步，就停下来，俯倒在地上，用整个身躯丈量出一段距离，再弓背爬起，如此反覆不已。那两个小孩，看上去也就五六岁左右，走得摇摇摆摆，刚被按在泥水里，又被大人提起来。而这家人自然是穿著藏服，长衣拖地，层层叠叠，从後面看上去，他们就像几个破碎的包袱，在泥海里无声地沉浮。

I suddenly thought back to the Buddhist teaching that "All human activities are simply aspects of suffering: life, old age, sickness and death..." Here was this pious Tibetan family demonstrating by symbolic actions how human life does, in fact, consist of suffering. Oh, how we long to finally escape from these sufferings!

After leaving the Lama Temple, we were wandering around a nearby street market and spotted the same Tibetan family. They were sitting on a nearby piece of open ground with a simple picnic lunch spread out on a piece of cloth. The two children were playing chasing with each other as their parents watched on fondly. They were smiling happily, their white teeth gleaming in the fresh sunshine.

I began to feel really confused. Human suffering? If everything we do brings only suffering, then why should it be so difficult for people to let go?

Christianity speaks of suffering too, but only after assuring us of a joyous hereafter. When God created the world, He declared that it was all very good. And if it is good, you cannot logically go on to deny or negate it all. I had always thought that the task of religion was to advise people how to renounce the world. Now I suddenly understood that your starting point can make a big difference. Buddhism wants to negate life, to reject it, while Christianity talks about affirming life and passing it on.

Eternal life versus samsara

Our mini tour group had started out with just two people. But as we moved on we met up with other 'pilgrims' so that by the time we reached Sichuan, there were ten of us in the group. We were all lively young people, prepared to face any hardship or adventure - except for boring tours. That year Sichuan had had a large number of landslides. When we got there, the long-distance bus on the route to Jiu Zhai Gou had already been out of service for more than a week. We had to stay on in Chengdu for three days and every day we went along to the bus station to check if there would be a bus running. On the fourth day, the people at the bus station seemed more amenable and we insisted on getting going. After we had given a guarantee that we would waive their liability, they agreed to resume service.

Almost everybody in this world lives life each day cherishing the strange notion that death will never come their way. Does anybody ever ask himself, "Is this the day when I am going to die?" Young people are especially like this. But our trip to Jiu Zhai Gou saw me facing death for the first time. As our bus started its ascent up the narrow spiraling road, our hearts seemed to be suspended in fear. We saw chilling scenes caused by land slides, where huge chunks of rocks and mud had swept across the road, making the narrow passage even narrower. Whenever the bus driver made a sudden swerve, the two outside wheels of the bus seemed to hang in mid-air, while we lurched backwards and forwards. One minute we were like wingless eagles being hurled out over the sea and the next like sinking kites being doggedly dragged back up. On this particular adventure, our merry laughter was strangely stilled. The boys' mouths were clenched shut as their faces turned green. The girls made good use of their feminine

我一直觉得这个比喻挺有意思。在重庆的时候，不知怎麼又想起这个比喻来。当时我们正在吃重庆火锅，整条街都挂满“正宗重庆火锅”的招牌。我就对那个信教的同伴讲了那个比喻，又点著在门口招揽生意的伙计说：“你看，哪里分辨得出哪个是正宗的？”

我的同伴没有马上回答，只是埋头吃火锅。过了一会儿他在腾腾蒸气中抬起头来，说：“你要是有一个真金戒指，你会愿意把真金熔掉掺入杂质，贬低其价值吗？凡生产名牌产品的厂家，哪个不是千方百计保护商标，以防假冒？如果神是真神，难道他没有能力阻挡人的谬误，使他的真道一脉相传？”“可你怎麼能肯定你的就是真的？”我不示弱地追问。

“真理越辩越明，”他毫不迟疑地说，“你去比较好了。”

其实我对基督教最大的批评，就是它听起来太简单了。神造万物，耶稣救赎，悔改永生，几句话就把道理都讲完了。佛教多玄啊，经书万卷，宗门百种，其智慧之深，令人叹服。世道真哲，难道不应是这个样子？

但对此我的同伴很不以为然：“说得多是说不清楚的表现，”他启发我，“因为看不清楚，所以才会有种种猜测。你若真知道一件事，几句话就说清楚了。”

我不说话了，生怕他问我佛是什麼，那可不是几句话就可以说清楚的。

我的同伴又用筷子点点火锅：“你说的不错，这满街卖的都是重庆火锅，要想嚐到真味确实不易。但有假的就一定先有真的。总不能以为怕假的，就连真的都不相信吧？”

鬼城奇遇

游完四川，我们从重庆坐船沿江而下。长江边有座鬼城，以建有逼真阴曹地府而驰名远近。据说无论是如何歹毒之人，只要到此一游，都会放下屠刀，皈依佛门。

I had always thought that this was a most interesting illustration and when I was traveling around Chongqing, the story came to my mind again. We were having a hot-pot dinner in a street where there were a large number of restaurants and each one was claiming to offer the best hot-pot dinner in town. So I told the story to my Christian companion. I pointed to the restaurant manager who was busy inviting passers-by to come in, "Look at that. How can you tell which one is right and which ones aren't?"

My friend did not reply, but kept on eating. After a while she raised her head and said through the steam from the hot-pot, "If you had a pure gold ring, would you melt it down and mix it with other metal? Name-brand factories do everything they can to protect their own brands and to defend themselves against fake products. If God is truly God, isn't He powerful enough to defend Himself against human blunders so that His truth can be handed on without distortion?" "But how do you know that yours is the genuine article?" I continued to challenge her.

"Truth only becomes clearer through debate," she said firmly, with no sign of giving way, "You figure it out."

Actually my biggest problem with Christianity was that it sounded too simple. God has created the heavens and the earth; Jesus saves; repent and you will receive eternal life. This is all Christianity is about. Buddhism is far more mysterious. Thousands of Buddhist scriptures and hundreds of Buddhist schools offer profound and convincing words of wisdom. Isn't that what truth and true philosophy should be like?

But my friend was not at all impressed by this, however: "Too many words are a sign of ambiguity," she said, "If something isn't clear, you are only left with different kinds of guesswork. But if you really know something, you can explain it in a few words."

I had to keep my mouth shut because I was afraid she would ask me what Buddhism was. And that couldn't possibly be explained in just a few words.

My partner pointed to the hot pot with her chopsticks, "You're right about real hot-pots and phoney hot-pots. It is not easy to find the real one. But no matter how many faked ones there may be, there must also be a real one. So you can't refuse to believe in the real one simply because you are afraid of fakes."

Wonders in the City of Demons

We left Sichuan and took the boat downstream along the Yangtse River. Alongside the river there was a city called the City of Demons. The city was famed as being close to the mouth of hell. It was said that everyone who went there, no matter how evil they were, would give up their wickedness and be converted to Buddhism.

“婆婆一切为苦，生老病死，爱别离，怨憎会，求不得，五阴盛…”我突然想起读过的佛书。这家虔诚的藏族人，已用很形像的行动，表明人生是有多少痛苦，人是多麽需要解脱。

看完喇嘛寺出来，我们在寺院附近的小摊上转悠，一抬眼，我看见刚才遇见的藏族一家子，正坐在附近的一块空地上，用布铺出一席很简单的野餐。两个小孩围著父母追打戏闹，他们的父母怜爱地看著他们，开心地笑著，洁白的牙齿在雨後的阳光里格外耀眼。

那一刻我迷惘了。婆婆之苦？若人生苦中无乐，要人看破放下有什麼困难？

基督教也讲苦难，看首先肯定的是快乐的存在。神造万物，“看著是好的。”既是好的，就不能全盘否认，完全弃绝。一直以为宗教都是看破红尘，突然才明白其实起点很不一样。佛教要对生命加以否定与扭转，而基督教讲的是对生命的肯定和延续。

永生与轮回

我们这个旅游小队，出发时才两个人，但沿途拉朋结友，行到四川时，队伍已扩大到十人团；都是血气方刚的年轻人，不怕吃苦，不怕冒险，只怕没有精彩的游历，对不起辛辛苦苦积攒起来的钞票子。那年四川多处闹山崩，等我们到时，通往九寨沟的交通车已经因道路被泥石流堵塞而停开一个多星期。我们在成都逗留了三天，每天都跑去车站打听路通了没有。到了第四天，售票小姐的口似乎有点松动，我们自然是紧追不放，最後在重复了一大堆出了危险自行负责之类的保证後，劝得她售了票。

其实几乎世上每个人，都抱著“死亡不会临到我”的侥幸心理，去度过每一天。有谁会问自己：“我今天会死吗？”年轻人就更不在乎了。但那次九寨沟之行，却使我第一次有机会面对死亡。当车沿著狭窄陡峭的出蜀道盘旋上昇时，我们的心也被恐惧慢慢升吊起来。沿路都是山崩後的踉跄风景，成堆的乱石泥土，被开路的解放军匆匆铲起，原来已经很窄的山道变得更狭小，每次急转弯，汽车外侧的两个轮胎犹如悬在空中，车上的人也彷彿与路面平行；正感到自己像一只没有翅膀的老鹰要坠入绿海，又被车猛然兜住，像一只下沉的风筝被狠狠扯回。在这样的惊险之中，我们这帮年轻人早没了说笑的兴致。男孩子们牙关紧闭，面

liberty to scream and screech. Far below us we could see the mangled wreckage of two cars. Even our driver lost his nerve. He stopped the bus and asked us to take a break.

"Next stop is Hell's Gate. Get ready for it!" he called out.

One person started cursing. However had we managed get ourselves stuck away up here? But human life inevitably has its crises. You may be able to escape some of them, but you cannot escape them all. I had often found reasons to avoid thinking about death. But now I had to face up it. Wasn't it a kind of fate?

What happens after death? I asked myself. "If Buddhism is true, then how can I know what I will be in my next life? A dog? a rich person? an imbecile? How much good do we have to do to ensure a good next life? Or perhaps there is simply nothing after death. If so, why should I bother to do good in this life? I don't know. I really don't know."

"I know the Lord will protect us!" Someone in the bus was standing up and speaking in a loud voice. It was the Christian in our party. "Let's pray together. When we are in trouble the Lord will give us His peace. When we face death, He will give us His eternal joy!" she announced confidently.

Normally we would all have all laughed at her, but at this crucial moment we could only look at her gratefully. We calmed down as we set off again. Our companion continued standing as the bus tossed up and down like a wok in a chef's hands and she sang hymns to encourage us. Before we knew it, Hell's Gate was behind us. The driver, who had turned away awkwardly during our friend's prayer, now turned around and gave her the thumbs-up. I was deeply moved.

More than once I had argued with her that there was really not much difference between the Christian eternity and the Buddhist samsara. But could I have stood up and made positive assertions about the future of all of us? I was not even sure of my own future, let alone that of other people. Not even a high-ranking monk could have encouraged us with such words of hope and of faith.

In the face of certain death, all human philosophies lose their meaning. So how was it that an ordinary Christian was able to be so calmly confident of her own destiny and at the same time to bring spiritual comfort to those around her?

True God versus man-made gods

Many of us have heard the story about religions concerning a father who had a pure gold ring that he wanted to pass on to his descendants. But how could he do this, since he had not one but three sons? So he had the ring melted down, divided the metal into three parts and made three rings out of them before passing them on to his three sons. As time went by, the three sons started arguing with each other, each claiming that only his ring was the true inheritance and that the others were fakes. The three rings represent Christianity, Buddhism and Islam.

目铁青；女孩子们则充分利用女性自由，每拐一次弯尖叫一次。再过一会儿，又看到山沟里有两部摔得不成形的车，这时连司机也泄了气，停了车，要大家休息。

“往下的路是鬼门关，准备见阎王噢！”他大声说，狠狠地抽烟。

车里有人大声诅咒起来。早知如此何必当初。可是人生总有不测风云，躲过一次，下一次呢？平常总有理由躲避对死亡和思考，如今不得不面对，这是否也是一种幸运？

死後是什麽呢？我默默地想。如果佛教是真的，那麽我将投胎何处？一只狗？一个富翁？一个傻瓜？人要做得多好，才能肯定自己可以涅槃呢？或者死後根本什麽也没有？既然如此我何必一直活得这麽认真呢？不知道，我真的不知道。

“我知道，神会保守我们的！”这时车里有人站起来大声说。正是与我同行的那个基督徒。“让我们一齐来祷告。神会在危难中赐我们平安，在我们面对死亡的时候，给我们永生的喜乐！”他坚定地说。

若在平时，大家都会笑他。但这时大家都感激地望著他。车子里渐渐平静下来。我们就这样又上了路。我的同伴站在翻腾如高厨炒菜锅的车子当中，唱赞美歌给大家打气。不知不觉过了鬼门关。当司机——刚才窘笑著躲开他的祷告的——回过头来向他竖起大拇指时，我的心极为不平静。

不止一次我和他争论过，基督教的永生与佛教的轮回大同小异。但我能像他一样站出来为众人指点未来吗？我连自己是否得道都不清楚，更谈不上顾及别人了。即便有一位佛家高僧在车上，也未必能讲出这麽有信心、充满希望的话语。

在真正面临死亡的时刻，一切理论都导致不可知的时候，为什麽一个普通的基督徒，却能这麽平静地肯定自己的结局，而且还能给周围所有人都带来心灵上的安慰？

真假菩提

很多人大概都听说过这样一个对宗教的比喻。一个父亲有一个真金戒指，要传给後代；他有三个儿子，怎麽分呢？於是他把戒指熔掉，分成三份，打了三个戒指分给後代。日後三个儿子都争辩自己的戒指是先辈传下的真货。三个戒指即代表基督教、佛教、伊斯兰教云云。