

Peace Wherever You Go.

The 10th lesson starts with the complaint of a Snail carrying its house from the day he was born. In retrospect, the moment I was born to this earth, God has carried me right from the beginning too.

From the book of "The Old Man and the Sea", it reflects on the stubbornness of man wishing to make his desired achievement at all cost. In other words, even if he has tried his best, his plan has failed, and the gain was his diligence and effort. Without his prize and no fish to show for, the old man remained safe and arrived at the "Home" he already had, waiting for him, where he can rest and get well again.

Man is made with a free will, to come and go as we wish. We still make doors to our houses to be closed and windows to see through from the outside, or to view the outside with curtains. For humans, we need a home where we live and where we feel safe.

There is a before and after when we talk about life and death. From the Gospel, we know we are all in line as 'last in, first out' or 'first in first out'. We learn of the magnanimous Love of God, our creator, who gave His Son's Life for our being saved from darkness to Light, from the finality of Death on earth to His Eternal Life in heaven. We will all be rewarded equally not because of our time of service, nor of how hard or good we have been. The Lord forgives all His true disciples who repent and change to follow Him.

Tao Yuanming (365-427) politician and Chinese poet, wrote in simple and direct style, about the ups and downs of coming and going of man, feeling caged without freedom, he spent much of his life in reclusion, living in the countryside, farming, reading, drinking wine, receiving the occasional guest, and writing poems in which he reflected on the pleasures and difficulties of life and his decision to withdraw from civil service.

Man's idea of changes in lifestyle normally requires movement from one place to the other, and networking with people from other parts of the world brings the romantic ideology of excitement and progress.

Our lives are a 'come' and 'go' scenario. As the sea must make waves, the lives of men cannot always be calm. The balance of man's free will versus God's Will for Christians is often raised on this earth. Mother Teresa has once said that if man's dignity is not attacked, it is the basic method to reach Peace.

From the book of Dao by Laozi, the sacred text of Daoism writes about the Home. This entity becomes the 'Safe Haven' when the Father loves the wife and the mother takes care of the family and children, bringing peace and love. The reverse bad effects on the family members will be entered into the Home if 'Love' is lacking from the beginning. This is predicted that such negativity will grow amongst the siblings for many generations to follow.

Rene Magritte (1898-1967) a Belgian surrealist artist known for his depictions of unexpected context. He examined the human psyche, and confronted our most complex thoughts through symbols and meanings that go beyond the limitations of rational thought.

Franz Kafka: 1883-1924 a novelist and Czech writer, famous for his novel "The Trial", in which a man is charged with a crime that is never named. His quote "It is often safer to be in chains than to be free."

Le Hsien Loong Senior minister of Singapore 1952

Some quotes: Fall to the ground and take roots - an action , a movement

Falling leaf return to roots - to spend one's last years

Jean-Paul Sartre 1905-1980, a French philosopher, he declined his 1964 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Some quotes: - You are condemned to be free

- We are living towards death or Being Towards Death. (It means that a person is not afraid of death, which is likely to be a new way of living)
- We are not created by ourselves, from the moment we enter this world, man must be responsible for everything we do. We are in the state of choosing in our days on earth.

'Being and Time' by Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, one of the founders of 20th century existentialist philosophy. Heidegger believes if life is a journey, then death is a direction. When we are alive, we are in death. Life and death are intertwined. If we don't know death, how can we know life? When we are inevitably heading towards death, only then will we cherish every bit of our life journey, experience the beauty of life in the process of death, and emit our own light.

As Christians, we believe we are freed by Jesus' death which released us from sin. The message from Jesus is to follow Him on the road to our destination. It is through our death that we can enter into our forever HOME.

Jesus' peace is what we pray for. As we put our palms together, Christians have a very different view of how we come and go in Peace. The 'Sacred' time is where then? Religious humans see Jesus with the marking of the Cross saying 'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit'..

As God's Love can never die, He can change our hearts and help us to conquer Hate. We can then let go of freedom, let go of life, and sacrifice for His Love. And the union of all men to be one can be reached in the Peace of God, brings Love, Forgiveness, thus crushing Hate completely.

Luke 14 26-27 Jesus said 'Those who come to me cannot be my disciples unless they love me more than they love father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and themselves as well. Those who do not carry their own cross and come after me cannot be my disciples.'

So death on earth can be every life's beginning of eternal life. Let us firmly listen to Jesus' teachings, always express our gratefulness for God's Love and His daily miracles bestowed upon each and everyone of us disciples, and for the Love and wisdom of the Holy Spirit guiding us in our daily lives. We thank our Holy Mother Mary for praying on behalf of sinners.

I wish to express sincere thanks to Fr Ha for his outstanding 10 classes on The Sacred and the Profane. It has been a most wonderful experience for me to think outside of my box and reach a better understanding of God and Man. I hope and look for your further teachings.