

BUDDHISM IS PESSIMISTIC

Philosophers believe in eternity or timelessness. This is a state of being in which there is no change or movement from past to present to future. The past and present and future moments of time are all rolled into one and they are in a kind of now. In a chapter called Some Weaknesses in Fundamental Buddhism in the book Christianity for the Tough-Minded we read that Buddha rejected the view that there is anything that always stays the same. So he rejected the eternal timeless and therefore unchangeable God of the Hindus. Buddha held that A causes B and B causes C and C causes D and D causes A so there is no point at which all things began. Suffering always existed. To get freed from this vicious circle of causality you have to break the links and you have to stop say C causing D. Buddhism denies that you can love your neighbour for himself for the self is something that should be destroyed or swallowed up in Nirvana. It denies the value of the person and your own value.

Christians don't like the Buddha's view that there was no first cause. The Christians reply that the Christian doctrine that God is the first cause or the originator of all things makes sense and his view doesn't.

The circle implies that you will have your present life all over again because when you get back to A after D that is what is happening. And why bother breaking the link when you are being replaced by a new you every second? The you that had the experience of Nirvana could be replaced by a you that does not. Why bother trying to save a future person who will take your place? It is only luck not effort that gives Nirvana because there is no person to make the effort. There is only a collection of things that acts like it does make efforts.

Also when C might cause Nirvana instead of D why work for Nirvana for it is only luck that gives it to you anyway? Those destined to get it might meditate and work for it but they were destined to get it in the first place that way. Some monks reach the state quicker than others. Zen promises the experience is possible within minutes but only some manage it. Nevertheless the point is you might not have to work for it.

Buddhists hold that karma not luck determines when you will be enlightened. But why is it that nobody is enlightened by doing good works but by meditating? Meditation then is the only real good work. Helping others could not be really good because it is like offering a beggar a penny when you could give him a pound. It would be better to give him a book on meditation instead. Good karma would mean you will be more inclined to meditating than anybody else but often this is not the case. Many people only come round to believing in meditating late in life! The strange attitude towards meditation indicates that enlightenment is unreal for to get it you have to selfishly get wrapped up in meditating in preference to helping others. So it is luck if you are enlightened not karma. No matter what kind of experience is promised at the end of meditation is the experience real? Practitioners don't know if their efforts will be worthwhile. Is it right to have people doing all that possibly for nothing? Meditation is better than good works and what Buddhism is doing is having people sacrificing life and others for faith.

The thought that you might meditate all your life and not reach enlightenment is fearful and itself must produce bad karma and desire.

Buddhist morality forbids killing even insects (page 295, Concise Guide to Today's Religions). We kill all the time. When we eat food the germs and bugs in the food die in our stomachs. This morality makes salvation impossible and it accuses those who claim to have been saved of being liars.

The book, The Spirit of Buddhism, insists that Buddhism is not pessimistic (page 35). It alleges Buddhism says that life gets better and more peaceful the more good works you do and the more meditation you do. The reason pessimism is bad is because it is a closed hearted response to life. It's making yourself and others suffer by your complaining and attitude. In the process you end up doing harm for you feel bad about things that should be enjoyed and fear a future that has not shown any sign yet of being a bad one. The optimism of Buddhism is only individualistic and spiritual optimism. The Buddhist is so pessimistic about life and normality that he retreats into himself to find happiness. That is not true optimism and is even worse than pessimism. At least the obvious pessimist can change when he or she has had enough of thinking badly of life all the time. The Buddhist pessimist can't. Anything that runs down real life be it pessimism or a self-centred spirituality is not to be applauded.

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