



## Dolpo Tulku Rinpoche Teachings

### **The Importance Of Dialogue Between Religions**

There are many religions in the world, which have developed through the differing views of people. It is the same principle, for example, as there are having many different tastes. Some people prefer a sweet taste, some like sour and some salty. For every taste there is a corresponding food.

No-one would ever think, that, just because they prefer a sweet taste, all food items need to be sweet and so everyone else has to comply with that particular taste. It is exactly the same with religion. People have different preferences and attitudes, and so there are many different religions to accommodate them. The ultimate goal of all religions is the same though: to help beings find happiness and well-being. The same goes for food. No matter if it is sweet, sour or salty, the aim is to be tasty and to fill our stomachs.

I think of religion as being a kind of rope that keeps humans connected. Of course, there have been many conflicts, which are based on religious beliefs. If we look back over thousands of years in history, however, religion has mainly brought about co-operation and peace between people. Many encounters, exchanges and understanding amongst Asian and European cultures stem from dialogue between religions.

Economic systems function in the same way. There are both positive and negative aspects. On one hand, wars and conflicts start again and again over resources and trade relations. On the other hand, there is also constructive development in many areas, and peace can be achieved and maintained. In this way, economic ties also function as a rope between countries and people.

I have had many encounters with Christians and clergy members, since 2010. Through this exchange, I have learned a great deal about how compassion can be developed within Christianity. Perhaps I only understood 20-30% of the main belief systems at the time. It is easy to learn more about the qualities of another faith through a healthy discussion. These days especially, with the help of the internet, we can learn both very easily and very quickly about others.

Respect for other religions is crucial, if we want to develop understanding. In Buddhism, there is a root vow, which says, that we should never speak badly about another religion or their representatives. But actually, that does not only apply to religions, but to anybody, and, any view that is beneficial for others. Whatever helps others to achieve happiness and well-being should be something to rejoice in.

*Kloster Schäftlarn near Munich, Germany, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013*

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