



*The following talks were given at the Memorial Ceremony at our International Head Temple, Providence Zen Center, on December 4, 2004*

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**I still have most of my body.** Our teacher has lost his body. We're all familiar with the poem in our school:

*Coming empty-handed, going empty-handed  
That's human  
When you're born, where do you come from?  
When you die, where do you go?*

And then the last two lines of the poem are:

*There is one thing that is pure and clear, not dependent on life or death.  
Then what is the one, pure and clear thing?*

I want to thank you all for coming today to recognize this occasion. Today there is not only a ceremony to recognize Zen Master Seung Sahn and his teaching in this country, but there are, in fact, ceremonies all over the world. He influenced so many of us in so many ways. Just like any time in our lives where there is a big event, whether it be a ceremony like this, whether it be a wedding, whether it be a birthday, whether it be a birth—those are big transition times. It's when the energy shifts. So what we do as human beings is, we pause at those times in our lives. We pause and we recognize. That's one part of our job today. The other part of our job today is to give Dae Soen Sa Nim's energy some direction as it continues out into the universe. And so we do some chanting.



Once, I remember I was talking to a fellow, one of our teachers out in Las Vegas, and he said, “One time I was with Dae Soen Sa Nim and this very studious, intelligent Buddhist scholar came to see him—an American. And he said to Soen Sa Nim, ‘You know, I’ve been studying the scriptures, the 84,000 sutras, and the more I study them the more confused I get. What is most important in Buddhism?’ Soen Sa Nim said: ‘Direction.’” Why is it that we do what we do?

The one thing that I learned from Soen Sa Nim which has been so helpful to me has been that when you do something, you make a 100% effort to be present and to do it. So as we proceed with this ceremony today, perhaps in our appreciation each one of us can make a 100% effort.

*Zen Master Bon Haeng*

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