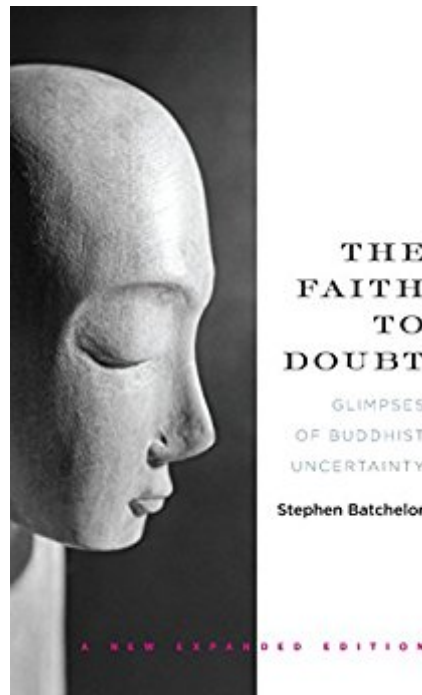




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The Faith To Doubt: Glimpses Of Buddhist Uncertainty



Synopsis

Kierkegaard said that faith without doubt is simply credulity, the will to believe too readily, especially without adequate evidence, and that "in Doubt can Faith begin." All people involved in spiritual practice, of whatever persuasion, must confront doubt at one time or another, and find a way beyond it to belief, however temporary. But faith is not equivalent to mere belief. Faith is the condition of ultimate confidence that we have the capacity to follow the path of doubt to its end. And courage.

In this engaging spiritual memoir, Stephen Batchelor describes his own training, first as a Tibetan Buddhist and then as a Zen practitioner, and his own direct struggles along his path. It is most uncanny that we are able to ask questions, for to question means to acknowledge that we do not know something. But it is more than an acknowledgement: it includes a yearning to confront an unknown and illuminate it through understanding. Questioning is a quest.

Batchelor is a contemporary Buddhist teacher and writer, best known for his secular or agnostic approach to Buddhism. He considers Buddhism to be a constantly evolving culture of awakening rather than a religious system based on immutable dogmas and beliefs. Buddhism has survived for the past 2,500 years because of its capacity to reinvent itself in accord with the needs of the different Asian societies with which it has creatively interacted throughout its history. As Buddhism encounters modernity, it enters a vital new phase of its development. Through his writings, translations and teaching, Stephen engages in a critical exploration of Buddhism's role in the modern world, which has earned him both condemnation as a heretic and praise as a reformer.

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Customer Reviews

Its title alone is a deep meditation. For me, the central significance of this book is that it tries to show how easily the path can lead into the trap of dogma. It also brings us to consider how culture and language obscure that which is already known to all of us. Stephen Batchelor has endeavoured to show that teachings are at their very best only a rough guide to enlightenment, and that we have to avoid using them as a specific map. As soon as we think a certain teaching or method is 'the right way', we limit our chances of awakening. We have to anticipate awakening without the limitations of knowledge and expectation, even without anticipation!If you are a struggling on your own, then you should read this book. But it is also a challenge for established paths.

excellent

Great Book!!!

Having previously read "Buddhism without Beliefs" and "Confession of a Buddhist Atheist" I found a few surprises. In the appendix and afterward he expressed doubt in the idea of a stripped to the essentials Buddhism for the West which was an idea that I got from his previous books. That aside, but on my mind since it was the last impression, I really liked his primary themes. I will be reflecting upon "what is that?" for a while. The relationship between the technical calculation attitude which is my norm and the this cannot be solved with calculated logic is also something to reflect upon. Perhaps I have grown too comfortable with my agnosticism. Yes, some things are certainly unknowable through logical process, but I may well be blocking out a benefit of meditation with my too Western mind. The book is both a good read and a source of lessons which might, hopefully, shape my practice. Don't think that having read his other books there will be nothing new, or should I say, unexpected.

Here is another excellent read from Stephen Batchelor. As a newcomer to Buddhism, its history and

metaphysics, I have appreciated seeing Buddhism through Mr. Batchelor's eyes, mind and heart. The Faith to Doubt offers his thoughts and experiences during his years at a Korean monastery. As with his other books, a thoughtful and informed overview of the history of Buddhism as it morphs its way through various cultures is offered. I find myself entranced and inspired.

I actually bought this book once, got rid of it out of frustration, then got redirected back to it and was much more ready to read it the next time. Maybe hand onto it and go back to it if you need to

I bought this book because I love the title and respect the author. This book has short chapters, reads much like a journal. Batchelor is giving his experience in Buddhism and his process in coming to his own faith. Anyone who has had to question their religion knows that it's not easy to doubt. In fact, in some religions it's almost sinful to doubt. But for a thinking individual, it's a right of passage in anyone's spiritual journey. I am half way through the book and enjoying his journey as it helps me reflect on mine.

sharp clarity; clean insights; great encouragement. highly recommended for people finding their own way, stumbling in the dark. here is a friend for us, who gives me strength to trust my own effort and insights.

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