

## Buddhism as superstition

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As we better understand Buddhism and focus our practice on the Dhamma, we see the historical Buddha as our true teacher. We also begin to see how Buddhism has been adulterated and hijacked into mistaken, confusing and bizarre forms of religious ideas and practices. In short, we see Buddhism becoming superstition.

**Superstition** is simply the wrong view that our problems which have all arisen from within our own minds (how we view ourselves and the world) can be solved by resorting to outside means. We wrongly believe that other people (monks, priests, gurus, even professionals) can solve our problem for us without understanding how we think.

### Con-Buddhism

As we understand Buddhism better, we know and accept that we can and should understand that how we think creates or worsens our problems. When we think with greed, hate and delusion, we surely create problems for ourselves. Only when we clear away these negative ideas and cultivate charity, love and wisdom will we know how to handle our problems, even to solve them.

For generations and centuries, monastics, priests, teachers, conmen, even professionals, have concocted their own “Buddhisms” claiming to solve every problem we have. We are then handing our reins over to them: they will then run our lives for us! We then have no real life.

This is just the opposite of the Buddha’s teaching of **self-reliance** and understanding how our own mind works.

Remember: When we think that our problems can be solved from the outside, that is superstition.

### Authentic teachings

Then, there are all kinds of sacred texts that claim to be the Buddha’s teachings. Not every holy text with the word **sutra**, or even **sutta**, is the Buddha’s teachings. Fortunately, today, we still have the **authentic** collection of the Buddha’s teachings called the Tipiṭaka (the 3 baskets of teachings) or the Pali Canon (with only one N) because it is compiled in the ancient language of Pali. These suttas are based on teachings that go back to the Buddha himself.

We know these authentic teachings in the Pali Canon by carefully studying them and practising them. Many good monks, nuns, lay practitioners, even academic scholars, have carefully studied these Pali texts and can show us how they are the true teachings of the historical Buddha. The best test is through our understanding of these Suttas, which teach us how to **meditate** or how to practise **mindfulness** for our own inner calm and clarity. In short, self-reliance.

## False teachings

The numerous false teachings appearing as holy texts pretending to use the words sutra or sutta are easy to be identified. They tell us that the Buddha is some kind of cosmic being (like a God) or that he is not really enlightened. This is false. They claim that **Bodhisattva** is enlightened but not the Buddha. This is false. In fact, bodhisattva was originally used by the Buddha for the time before his awakening, when in this life itself, he was seeking to discover **true reality**.

The false Sutras often belittle the Buddha, claiming that he has to become a **Bodhisattva**. This is simply turning backwards what the Buddha has taught! These false Sutras also look down on the **arhats**, claiming that they are not really enlightened. This is simply false: the Buddha has always declared that the arhats are awakened just like the Buddha himself. This is the teaching found, for example, in the Sambuddha Sutta (S 22.58), SD 49.10. Read it for yourself.

## Religious viruses

Like dangerous computer viruses and Trojan Horses, these Sutras, like the Lotus Sutra, were written by Non-Buddhists to confuse the Buddhists. Their cunning idea was to be present a "Sutra" to sound just like the Buddha's teaching, and to say things which will make us believe in wrong views that will only confuse us, and reject the actual teachings of the Buddha found in the Pali Canon.

Religious ideas, like political ideas, can be **very powerful**. Various teachers and leaders, desiring power, introduce their own wrong views, and preach their false Buddhisms. The reality is that these false Buddhisms seem true because of their Organizations, Buildings, Showmanship and Salesmanship which impress us in worldly ways, that we mistake a mirage for the real thing.

## Plain truth

The plain truth is that Sakyamuni Buddha is our one and only true teacher. He is the historical Buddha, just as we need and can have only one father. We only have and need the one historical Buddha to teach us self-reliance and free us from suffering that have arisen from our own mind.

A ship will safely sail so long as we do not allow water to flood her. When we let the waters of false teachings into our Dhamma ship, it will then sink with us in it. We must wisely and diligently keep the waters of delusion out. Let us sail safely.

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[an occasional re-look at the Buddha's Example and Teachings]

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