



**Right Practice is the destination. The destination is Right Practice.**

Refining and perfecting one's practice should be a daily objective for each individual. By refining and perfecting our practice daily, we change, and change leads to growth.

***The Way of God***

The Bow always begins with silence. All mental and verbal conversation should cease. The activity of bowing is the harmonizing of the inner world and the outer world.

There are three forms of bowing:

- ☉ Formal - (which is always used between the student and the Roshi, or the Abbess, and bowing as an act of reverence towards a symbol, a religious site such as a stupa, or an icon.)
- ☉ Informal
- ☉ Social

The "formal" bow is practiced as such: (when in a standing position)

- ☉ First, Gassho. Then place your hands on your thighs. Slightly bow your head, and then sliding your hands along your thighs, while bending forward, commit your bow. Your body should then form a kind of upside-down "L" shape.
- ☉ Never allow your hands to go below your knees.
- ☉ Never spread your fingers apart.
- ☉ Never bow too low, or too fast.
- ☉ Rising slowly, return to Gassho, and then proceed.
- ⇒ When sitting, as in zazen:
  - ☉ Gassho and slightly bend your head, bending forward, place the palms of your hands, (with your index fingers touching), on the tatami or floor. Bring your forehead to the tatami or floor, touching it, (or as closely as possible).
  - ⇒ When sitting in a chair, follow the above, except, and place your hands on your thighs instead of the tatami or floor.
- ☼ The key is - "What do I want to communicate when bowing?"

