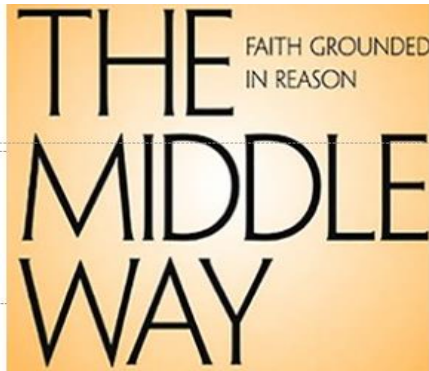


MIDDLE WAY 中道



The Middle Way is an alternative name the Buddha gave to his Noble Eightfold Path. Buddha gave it this name because the Buddhist spiritual life should be lived avoiding the extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence, indeed, all extremes. This emphasis on balance and moderation has meant that Buddhism has produced very few fanatics or extremist groups during its long history.

Monks, these two extremes ought not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the household life. (What are the two?) There is addiction to indulgence of sense-pleasures, which is low, coarse, the way of ordinary people, unworthy, and unprofitable; and there is addiction to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable.

Avoiding both these extremes, the Perfect One has realized the Middle Path; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nibbana. And what is that Middle Path realized by the Buddhists. It is the Noble Eightfold path, and nothing else, namely: right understanding, right

thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.