

## **TKD Lifestyle**

**by Dr. Dennis McCain**

Much has been said about the "martial arts way" over the years, and varied ways have been used to describe the "Do" of Taekwondo. I believe that many advocates of the "do" (way of TKD) suggest a wrong and dangerous philosophy of life. They teach that martial artists are to develop inner strength from within themselves (it already exists say some), that your physical and mental skills will prevail over all the situations of life, and that mankind is intrinsically good. From a strictly human perspective this sounds plausible.

Does this "inner strength" really exist? Recently I watched a martial arts video in which an instructor expounded the way of his fighting style. He suggested that if we worked hard, meditated, and did Tai-Chi Ch'uan we would "possibly" achieve peace and oneness with nature and our physical world. The instructor indicated that he had not achieved this "oneness" over 25 years of martial training and hoped to find "it" in another life.

This is sad because he will never find it! Inner strength actually means "true character." Character is developed over time, but will never be fully developed without the work of Christ in our lives. The wrong philosophical approach never achieves the the goals that we have for our lives, because it is man-centered. We were born imperfect, we live imperfectly, and we will die without perfection. Any teaching that promotes a man-made way to achieve "humble perfection" falls short of meeting our real needs. If we are to seek truth, then we must seek it from the source of all truth, the the Bible (the Word of God).

Can our mental and physical attributes conquer all the issues of life? I have heard instructors espouse this idea that martial arts will allow you to be strong enough to conquer every area of life. It is not true! We will never conquer all circumstances in our own strength. The power of positive thinking only gives a false concept of reality. View the harsh circumstances of life as unwanted and difficult, but the reality is that you cannot wish them away. Recently, someone said to a friend, "Say to yourself that you are not ill and you won't be anymore." I wish that this was true! No one would be ill. It is far better to see the truth of circumstances, and view them as stepping stones to the building of godly character.

Are we basically good? As we are better educated and make more money, do we suddenly become better, and then, consequently, have success in every area of our personal lives? Look around and find the answer for yourself. Man is not intrinsically good. The Bible says that there "is none righteous, no not one." Goodness and righteousness do not come from man, but from God. So, when you are looking for the way of Taekwondo, examine the truth and reality, not the mere philosophical ideas of man.