

khu, stayed at Taiwan for four months beginning from the 26th. of Dec. 45 C.R.

(4) Seventeen Members of the Overseas Chinese Buddhists in the Philippines came back to the Motherland on the 5th. of July.

(5) New administrators and controllers of the Chinese Buddhist Association were elected.

(6) The overseas Chinese Buddhists in the Philippines suggested the establishment of an association for overseas Chinese Buddhists in other countries. The preparatory meeting was held at Taipei on the 8th. of August.

(7) The Chinese Buddhist Association held a Country Protecting and calamity stopping ritual on the 11th. of October.

(8) The Pictorial "Today Buddhism" was established and round the island preaching was arranged.

(9) The Ven. Bhikshuni Wenchu, a writer with Bodhedrum, came back to Taiwan on the 22nd. of August for one month.

(10) The first Buddhist library was organized and constructed.

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Buddhist Activities

(1) The Ven. Yanpei preached the Sutra of Eight Enlightenment at the Paochao Temple of Taichung.

(2) The Amitabha Sutra was explained at the Lotus Club of Taichung and the Sutra of 42 Chapters was explained at the Lingshan Temple of Taichung.

答問學佛

Questions on Buddhism

士居南炳李：者答解

Answered by Mr. P. N. Li

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Q. There are many methods of practice in the Pure Land Sect. Can I perform two of them at the same time? For example, can I repeat the name of Amitabha and meditate on the image of

Amitabha at the same time?

A. Formerly there were Pure Land practitioners who repeated the name and meditated on the image of Amitabha at the same time; but after Venerable Lienchih practitioners concentrate on one method only because it could easily cause the mind to become concentrated.

Q. It is difficult for one to be reborn to the Pure Land if he doesn't take the will of compassion, pity, gratefulness and charity. Is the above statement correct?

A. The practice of repeating Amitabha is a method of Mahayanist Buddhism. The proper requirement is to take the will of Bodhi which contains both the desire of being a Buddha and the salvation of all sentient beings. If one aims only on the rebirth to the Pure Land, and if he can perform diligently, he shall be reborn to the Pure Land but the rank will not be high.

文論學佛

Buddhism and Daily Life.

By Phra Sumangalo

Inasmuch as Buddhism is more than anything else a way of life, with particular emphasis placed on one's every thought and act, a talk on the subject of "Buddhism and Daily Life" is rather an agreeable task for me. This emphasis on the details of daily living is the result of the Buddhist teaching that the law of cause and effect is quite as irrefutable in the moral world as in the physical realm and that our lives are what we make them to be by our thoughts and acts. Therefore, to us, it is not a matter of supreme importance what an individual believes in the way of creedal formulations. What he does is of paramount importance.

There are well-formulated teachings in Buddhism, but nothing in the way of an inflexible confession of faith or creed in which one must believe. The Lord Buddha made it plain that each individual is his own High Court of Appeal and advised that no teaching be accepted

until validated by one's own objective examination and dispassionate analysis. Eight points are given to be used as a pattern for daily living. These eight directions for forming a pattern of life are intended for the overcoming of ignorance, conceived by Buddhists as being the parent of all suffering in the world and the prime source of all negative or inharmonious aspects of life. First of all we are counselled to achieve:

(1) Highest understanding.

This means not solely understanding in the sense of acquiring a good academic education, but the development of the finer perceptions and the ability to see all things as they really are and not as we often fondly imagine them to be. Seeing the world through the rose-colored glasses of wishful thinking or the darker lenses of prejudice is ruled out. In modern scientific terminology this would be known as the maintenance of objectivity. Admittedly this is no easy attainment but is it accomplished by the persevering use of point two:

(2) Highest thought.

By "highest" is meant the highest degree possible to a given individual. We envisage no escape from the toils of ignorance until such time as mastery of thought is accomplished. From subjective thinking or fuzzy cog mentation there can come only a muddled understanding of life. Thought and understanding will manifest their quality or lack of quality in:

(3) Highest speech.

That is to say, speech free from pettiness, falsity, slander, faultfinding, harshness and idle chattering. There are few of us who have any really well-kept secrets. Our speech gives away the true nature of the inner man and our associates usually know us far better than we think they do. Moreover, by speech we bless or soil our companions and associates. Speech, in conjunction with point four, enables the world to know us

for what we really are.

(4) Highest Action.

All one's activities raised to a plane so far removed from mediocrity, pettiness and egocentricity that the effects therefrom are entirely harmonious and free from negation. perhaps the shortest way to describe the Buddhist concept of highest action is to label it "affirmative living."

(5) Highest Livelihood.

This fifth point is akin to the preceding one but clarifies and enriches it by teaching that each of us is under obligation (both to himself and to the world) to justify his presence in the world by earning his living in such a manner that he adds to the sum total of human happiness rather than detracts therefrom or pursues a course that is negative in the sense that it is neither helpful nor hurtful.

(6) Highest Effort.

All the profound understanding of which one may be capable is of little practical worth unless that understanding is re-inforced by highest effort. Buddhist is definitely not a system of finely spun theories or something to which intellectual assent is to be given. Above all else it is a way of everyday life.....life raised to the highest potential of which we individually are capable. Less than this is self-cheating and a species of robbery of the entire social structure of mankind.

(7) Highest mindfulness.

The development of the normal faculty of attention to the point where real concentration becomes a normal adjunct of one's thinking. In modern parlance this may perhaps be well-described as ability to "stick to the point." In the more mundane sphere of daily life we see the vast advantage held by men and women who know how to practice a concentrated mindfulness. In the business world

such persons are the ones who get the promotions, self-earned of course, by their own concentrated thoughts and consequent acts.

(8) Highest meditation.

The ability to rise above the limits of ordinary mentation and realize conscious unity with the Universal Mind, a unity in which all limitations are at least momentarily transcended. This is referred to by Buddhists as "knowledge beyond knowledge" as it goes quite beyond the power of words and all the limitations of concepts. This mystical unity is not to be attained until such time as the entire eightfold path is not only used but actually becomes part and parcel of life so that practice and practitioner are one.....the knower, the knowledge and the known become indistinguishable. This eighth point on the path is considered by Buddhists to be the crown jewel of the way to liberation from inharmony through the conquest of ignorance and lethargy.

In this present era of human history we see the world divided into two opposing camps or conflicting ideologies. We commonly label this as Communism versus Free-World-ism and, to some extent, this is a correct use of terminology. The main, indeed the only fault that Buddhists have with this terminology is that it seems to us to be less than fully accurate as we see a broader conflict or rather TWO broader conflicts, namely the conflict between matter and spirit and between the concept that the mass or aggregate of society is all and the individual is nothing and the Buddhist idea that the individual is everything and that it is hopeless to expect a happy society unless we can first make happy the individual components of society. As we see the matter, we can not even so much as have the word "society" unless first of all we have individuals. As for the

conflict between the ideologies based on a materialistic conception of the universe on the one hand and the spiritual view that the universe and the life contained within it are something more than the sum of the parts, Buddhism can see no means of reconciling these poles-apart approaches to understanding life and bettering it. Therefore, anyone who deceives himself that he can be at once a materialist and a follower of materialistic philosophy, so called, is indeed quite a mental acrobat if he can also believe himself to be a Buddhist.

As to whether Buddhism is a workable philosophy and a practical pattern for daily living, I can only testify that from many years spent among Buddhist peoples and in Buddhist lands, such a pattern is indeed a very practical one and results in a degree of fellow-feeling and active kindness that one seldom observes in the more materialistically minded Western world. In my own adopted country of Thailand I never see anyone give way to anger or harsh words. Cruelty, whether to man or animals, is almost an unheard of thing and the age-old maxim that giving is better than receiving is seen to be believed on every hand because it is universally practiced. As for willingness to live and let live on the international scene as well as the more local stage, I am convinced that the prime thought in the hearts of Buddhist people everywhere is the promotion of goodwill among men to the end that we may have peace on earth.

In conclusion, may I offer to all in my audience who will accept it, my most sincere blessing and my hope that peace may enter into the hearts and deeper consciousness of all who have honored me by listening to this broadcast.

An address given over the AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION in May 1956. As a result of this radio lecture more than 7000 letters came to the lecturer: Venerable Phra Sumangalo (Robert Clifton).