



Nancy, 03/27/2021

Precepts or Not?

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Mar 27th, 2021. How are you doing? Have you ever wonder, “Should I uphold the precepts? Why should I uphold precepts?”

Let me ask you a question first, “Do you think a river will flow into the ocean without its riverbanks?”

As a cultivator, the purpose is to become enlightened. To become enlightened, to continuously increase energy is a must. Without upholding precepts, one’s energy would be dissipated. It’s like the river flowing to the ocean. Without the riverbanks, the river will spread and will not go far, not to mention flowing to the ocean.

Cultivation is also like driving on a dangerous road. Precepts are the guardrails. Upholding precepts is a protection. In another word, without upholding precepts, where is cultivation? Upholding precepts is ONE with cultivation.

For a cultivator, only when strictly upholding precepts, could he or she be protected by the guardians, and respected by all ghosts and gods.

Now let me share a story with you.

Once in Shravasti, there was a lay man. He had a young and beautiful wife who was famous and peerless. Many people wanted to take a look at her, but she normally would not show herself.

A person told the King and the King was also curious how beautiful a woman could be, but he couldn’t find a reason to take a look at her.

An official said to the King, “This couple both are Buddhists and uphold the five precepts. When they make offerings to cultivators, they would give them in person.”

So the King disguised himself as a monk and he came to the lay couple’s house. The wife saw a monk coming for food, she came out quickly and paid homage to him. The King looked carefully at her and saw that she was indeed a beauty. After he returned, he said to his ministers, “The woman is indeed peerless. I like her. How can I get her?”

Again, the King took a suggestion. He sent the layman to a lotus pond hundreds of miles away to pick five-colored lotus flowers. To be able to get those flowers, one had to overcome three difficulties-poisonous snakes, ghosts and gods, and evil beasts in order to reach the pond smoothly. Before this layman, there were many criminals who were sent to pick the flowers. They all died on the road and none could finish the task.

After a discussion with his wife, the man was on his road alone. He chanted the name of the Buddha in the mind and recited the ten precepts in the mouth without stopping. He met a ghost who ate humans first. The ghost asked him who he was. The man said, “I am a faithful Buddhist.”

The ghost said, “Only those who are guilty are handed over to us for disposal. Hypothetically let them fetch flowers. But you are not guilty, you are just being framed. I will not harm you.



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There are still two difficulties ahead. Let me help you. You hide here, and I will go pick the flowers for you. By saving your life, I could also accumulate countless merit.”

Shortly after, the ghost came back with many five-colored lotus flowers, and he also helped the man carry the flowers to the palace gate.

The King was surprised to see the man back with the flowers and in such a short time. He asked the man about his journey, and the man honestly told the King what happened.

After hearing that, the King was amazed and ashamed, and deeply moved. He said, “They say that evil spirits are unreasonable, don’t know right from wrong, and like to harm all living beings, but they are helping good people now. On the contrary, I don’t reason. I don’t distinguish between good and evil. I am not as good as even a ghost!”

At the end of the story, the lay couple both obtained non-returning fruits.

Precepts are the foundation and precondition in cultivation. Without upholding precepts, no matter how much effort you put, it’s still useless. Keeping precepts is the precondition for energy increasing and self-purification. There are many Dharma doors in cultivation, and upholding precepts is the priority one in all of them. There is no exception.

Amitabha! This is today’s Dharma share. Thank you everyone for being here watching this video. Leave comments and questions if you have any. I for sure will answer them in time. See you next time. Bye.