

## What Did the Buddha Say about Gratefulness?

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Nov 26th, 2021. My late greeting to you: Happy Thanksgiving! Today, I really wanted to share with a a story about how the Buddha helped an old man find his gratefulness and change his miserable life.

During the Buddha's time, there was an old man. He had five children, but none of them wanted to take care him. He had no choice but beg along the streets and became a beggar. He felt that life was full of pain. He resented his children for their lacking of filial piety, at the same time, he felt hopeless about his miserable fate in his later years.

One day, he met the Buddha and asked, "Compassionate Buddha, can you help me change my situation?" The Buddha asked him, "Do you know what is being grateful?" The old man replied, "I don't know what is being grateful. Please tell me Buddha."

The Buddha pointed to his walking stick and said, "Are you grateful to your walking stick?" The old man thought for a while and said, "Of course I am grateful to it. When I meet a ferocious dog on the street, I use it to protect me; when the road is rugged or steep, it is my support; when I am tired or sleepy, it is my pillow. I depend on it, so I am indeed very thankful to my walking stick."

Hearing that, the Buddha was joyful and praised the old man, "Very good. From now on, everyday, say thank you to your walking stick. After some time, your fate will be changed."

The old man believe in the Buddha's words. From that day on, everyday, he said 'Thank you' to his walking stick. Gradually, not only that, he also started to say 'Thank you' to the people who gave him food, and then, he also thanked all the people including those who harmed him or cheated him. Being grateful drove all the resentments in his heart. Day after day, month after month, there was nothing left in his heart, but only being grateful. He entered a kind of Samadhi. You may call it the Samadhi of being grateful to the walking stick.

One day, the Buddha was preaching in a assembly. The old man thought, "I am happy now and my happiness was endowed by the Buddha. I need to thank you to the Buddha." So he went to the assembly to listen to the Buddha teaching. Seeing him, the Buddha unexpectedly said to the assembly, "Today, let's invite a venerable cultivator to talk about his samadhi of being grateful."

So, the Buddha invited the old man to the stage and asked him to talk about his story. His five children happened to be there that day. They listened to their father's story and they felt ashamed. Their father was grateful to even a stick while they were not grateful to their father who raised them. Even animals knew to feed back. They realized how wrong they had been. After the assembly ended, they all rushed to their father and invited him to live with them.

At that time, the Buddha said to the old man, "Your fate has changed. A person without a grateful heart has nothing while a person with a grateful heart will not be short of anything."

Amitabha! This is today's dharma share, the Buddha's words about being grateful. It's thanksgiving time. I have some small gifts to give out if you are interested. Send me an email with your address and I will mail them out before Christmas. It will be limited to people in US. My email will be under this video. Have a happy holiday season. Stay safe. Bye!