

What is Needed to Become a Buddha?

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Jan. 2ed, 2022. Happy New Year to all of you! The earth is going through some transitions, so this coming year still will not be that pleasant for many people. I wish all of you a safe and peaceful 2022. Today, I am going to share with you the road to become a Buddha. I think this is the right talk to share with you at the beginning of the year.

As you may know, the Buddha spent about 7 years practicing asceticism. He ate very little and meditated most of the time. At the end he almost fainted. Lady Sujata brought him a bowl of rice milk to eat, and after that he started to walk on the middle way and got enlightened.

So, if one vows to become a Buddha, what is needed? What should one do? Meditate all the time like the Buddha? Or recite sutras and hold mantra? Or make a lot of offerings? What is needed to become a Buddha?

In Buddhism, you may hear these terms like Buddha fruit, the Arhat fruit, or other kinds of fruits. To become a Buddha, or to grow to become a Buddha, it's like the ripening process of a fruit. It takes time. It is not a one life thing. Instead, it's a long-time process, and it takes countless kalpas. For example, the Buddha actually spent 500 lives just to practice one thing, endurance which means that no matter how others treat you, you remain a peaceful mind. It's a process of purification. Most importantly, it's a process of accumulating merits and virtues. Yes, merits and virtues are needed or the essential factor to become a Buddha. Without merits and virtues, one cannot do anything, let alone becoming a Buddha. There are many ways to accumulate merits and virtues. Today, I am going to share some of the ways with you. Some of the ways, you may already know.

1. Uphold precepts. There are many kinds of precepts. If one upholds one precept, one gets merits and virtues from upholding one precept. Upholding five precepts, you get merits and virtues from upholding five precepts. Do you remember the five basic precepts: no killing, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no false speech, no smoking/ no alcohol drinking/no gambling. These are the five basic precepts. For a lay person, it's good to uphold this five basic precepts. Monks have monks' precepts. Maybe like they have 250 precepts. Nuns have nun's precepts. Bodhisattvas have Bodhisattvas' precepts, and Buddhas have Buddhas' precepts. The more precepts you uphold, more merits and virtues you can get.
2. Abstain from meat eating. Removing meat from one's diet, one is also saving lives. On average, Americans consume about 200 pounds of meat each year, and this number does not count seafood and fish. That's a lot of lives. No meat eating is also a way to purify our body.
3. Repent the wrong doings in the past. Repentance is a great way to cleanse our mind, to reform ourselves, and to be reborn.
4. Make Bodhi vows. If one is able to bring up ones' Bodhi heart and make the vow to become a Buddha, that's truly rare and commendable. That means that one can resist all the temptations from this world, and detach himself or herself from this world.
5. Chant the name of the Buddha; recite sutras, and hold mantras. These are great ways to channel to the Buddha, to resonate with the Buddha, and to be blessed by

the Buddha. These can be done as daily compulsory course. Whenever you have some free time, chant the name of the Buddha, Amitabha, or recite some sutras, hold some mantras. It's a great way to use your free time on each day.

6. Transfer merits and virtues. Transfer the merits and virtues you accumulate to becoming a Buddha. You determine where your merits and virtues go. Some people might not want to become a Buddha yet. Merits and virtues can be exchanged for worldly things like wealth, or fame, or high position, or to become a Buddha. You determine that.
7. Be grateful. A person with a grateful heart is not short of anything. A person without a grateful heart will lose everything. We all help each other and that is needed to become a Buddha. No one can become a Buddha by himself or herself.
8. Entreat the Buddha to stay in the world to preach Dharma. It is the way for Buddha Dharma to continue to stay in the world to repel the ignorance of the living beings. It is of countless merits and virtues.
9. Practice the six Paramitas which are upholding the precepts, keeping a Buddhist diet, enduring under unpleasant situations, diligently practicing, meditating, and continuing to open your wisdom, the six parasites.
10. Rejoice in other's achievements. People tend to envy others' achievements. If one could rejoice others' achievements, this person will obtain the same merits and virtues as the person who makes the achievement.

Amitabha! This is today's Dharma share. There are many ways to accumulate merits and virtues and I only listed ten of them. A thousand miles begins with a single step. It's the right time to make your determination and march forward. I wish all of you become a Buddha soon and be liberated from this world of suffering. Don't get stuck in here; Don't get stuck in this time and space. Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time. Bye.