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## Liao-Fan's Four Lessons

### THE THIRD LESSON:

#### THE WAYS TO CULTIVATE GOODNESS

##### Practicing the Ten Good Deeds When the Condition Arises

There are many ways to help others whenever the opportunity presents itself. In short, the ways of helping others can be simplified into ten important categories. The first category is "supporting the practice of kindness". The second is "revering love and respect". The third is "helping others to succeed in doing good". The fourth is "persuading others to practice kindness". The fifth is "helping those in desperate need". The sixth is "developing public projects for the greater benefit of people". The seventh is "practicing merits by giving wealth". The eighth is "protecting and maintaining the proper teachings". The ninth is "respecting elders". The tenth is "loving and cherishing all living things".

This is what is often referred to as being joyful over others meritorious deeds. We do our best to help everyone at every possible opportunity. Because there are so many kinds of virtuous conduct that can be accomplished when the right opportunity arises, they have been summarized into these ten main categories. They are truly beneficial to everyone and we would do well to do all we can to achieve them. In the following, we will examine each one separately.

What does 'supporting the practice of kindness' mean? In the Yu Dynasty, there once was an emperor by the name of Shun. One day, before he became emperor, Shun was watching some fishermen on Lake Leize. He noticed that all the younger and stronger fishermen took the spots where the water was deep and the fish were abundant, while the older and weaker fishermen were left with the rapids and shallow water, where there were very few fish.

Mr. Liao-Fan used an example here to teach us how to interact with other people and how to lead and persuade others to practice kindness. Lake Leize is located in Shandong province. During ancient times, fishing was an important part of daily life. The older fishermen were forced to fish in the rapids and shallow waters where the fish were scarce and not easy to catch because the best spots had all been taken by those who were young and strong.

When Shun saw this situation, he felt sympathy for the older fishermen. He decided to join in the fishing. Whenever he saw fishermen grab the good fishing spots, he would not speak of their faults. When he saw those who were humble and yielding, he praised them everywhere he went and even followed their humble and polite ways. Shun stayed and fished like this for a whole year until the other fishermen got into the habit of yielding good fishing spots to others.

Feeling saddened by the situation, Shun thought of an inventive way to remedy it. He was wise, patient, skillful and clever, so he joined the fishermen in catching fish. His true intention was not to catch fish but to try to reform the younger fishermen. When he saw people competing for a spot, he would say nothing. However, when one of them yielded to the other, he praised them highly. He used the method of "concealing faults and praising kindness". After persisting in this way for a year, the young fishermen were all reformed by Shun and ceased fighting over the fishing spots as they yielded to others.

In our society today, much effort has been spent in highlighting bad deeds and conduct. As soon as someone acts contrary to customs, behaves immorally or breaks the law, the media greatly publicizes it. Good deeds are often not publicized. When this is done, then there is bound to be more bad than good people for when no one recognizes good deeds, there is little motivation to practice goodness. In fact, it would be even more encouraging to practice wrongdoings.

We should follow the examples set by ancient sages and virtuous people. They did not speak of others faults but waited for those people to reflect upon themselves until they had awakened. This is the proper way to teach people. Everyone has a conscience. Sometimes it can be overwhelmed by the desires for wealth and power. As long as we use the expedient way to help others to see the truth, they will eventually come around. This was what Emperor Shun did with the fishermen. In the following passage, we can see why sages and virtuous people acted as they did.

A wise and intelligent man such as Shun could have easily influenced others with a few words of advice. Why did he not just say something instead of changing others by setting a good example? Shun's painstaking and good intentions were like the expert craftsmanship that comes only as the result of long practice and hard work.

Shun did not want to use words to influence others, preferring to set an example for them through his own actions. Although it took a longer time, the effects would be much more lasting because "actions speak louder than words". From this, we can see Shun's wisdom.

In today's era of low morality, social breakdown and loss of proper thinking, it is most difficult to find a good standard of behavior. Therefore, when those around us have shortcomings, we do not use our good points to highlight their deficiencies. When others are unkind, we do not use our kindness and compare ourselves to them. When others are not as capable as we are, we do not purposely surpass them with our abilities. Even when we are intelligent and competent, these skills are to be kept hidden and not boasted of. Instead, we need to behave even more modestly than ever. When someone makes mistakes, we tolerate and conceal them, providing the opportunity to reform without the loss of self-respect.

We need to painstakingly refrain from these acts. Just because we have certain good points or advantages that others lack, it does not mean that we can gloat over them. Instead, we must learn to conceal our abilities and to accommodate the faults of others. Remembering this and not flaunting our skills and intelligence is true broad-mindedness and tolerance. If we need to show off every time we can do something, then we will accomplish little. If we were truly capable of great achievements, we would not be as superficial as many people are. We would have more depth. By being tolerant, not speaking of the faults of others and praising the goodness of others, we will truly be upholding the precepts and cultivating good fortune.

When we allow others to keep their dignity, they will be even more careful of future actions. When we see strengths or small kindnesses in others, we can learn from them and praise them to others.

If we can set an example with our own behavior to the extent that others learn moderation, then we have done very well. When we see the slightest goodness displayed by others, we should be happy about it and praise the person more for it.

When I first met my late teacher, Mr. Bing-Nan Lee, he taught me not to talk about the faults of others and better still, to hide them. I understood that. However, he also told me not to praise others. That confused me. I realized that discussing the faults of others was not a good deed but on the other hand, praising others should be fine, so why should I not praise others for their goodness. He later explained, "When you praise somebody, the harm you have caused is even greater than when you scold him for his faults". How could that be? He continued, "It takes great wisdom to know how to praise others. Thoughtless praise can cause a person great harm. If others display a little bit of ability and we praise them excessively, then they might become so proud of the fact that they would think that they were incredible. Thinking in this manner would prevent them from making further progress. When they do not progress, they regress. Now, haven't you done more harm than good?" After

thinking about this, I understood the logic in what he had said.

So, what sort of a person should we praise? In Buddhism, we praise the one who is unaffected by the “eight emotions of others”. The emotions of gain, loss, fame, disgrace, praise, blame, pleasure and pain. We can praise this kind of person because he or she will not be harmed but will remain unmoved by our praises. In fact, the more we praise such an individual, the more modest he or she becomes and the more he or she will strive to improve. We should give special praise to people such as this. Therefore, we should be extra careful with our praise, not inadvertently allowing our good intentions to lead to bad deeds. So from this passage, we can now see how much care Emperor Shun used in taking an entire year trying to help the young fishermen to correct their faults and bad habits.

In daily life, we can refrain from speaking and acting with selfish intentions, but instead, seek to benefit society. We can set standards for others to follow. These are the qualities of a great person, who thinks of the public welfare as more important than his or her own.

When we set standards for others to follow, we should set an example with our own conduct for others to follow. What are the qualities of a great person that Mr. Liao-Fan was talking about? It is someone who disregards his own personal welfare and thinks only in terms of benefiting all others as opposed to the selfish person who only thinks of benefiting himself or herself. For example, Bodhisattvas would be considered “great beings”. In the Sutra on the Eight Realizations of the Great Beings, the term “Great Beings” refers to the Bodhisattvas and the eight kinds of realizations. It discusses the ways and the practice of the Bodhisattva.

What is meant by "revering love and respect for others"? Sometimes it is hard to tell from appearance whether one is an honorable person or a fraud, since frauds can pretend to be honorable. The difference lies in their intentions. The difference between them is like black and white. So, Mencius said that the difference between truly honorable people and ordinary people lies in their intentions.

Confucianism talks about “honorable persons, sages and virtuous people”. In Buddhism, there are “numerous Buddhas and Bodhisattvas”. What differentiates these two from ordinary people lies in "intention". It is extremely difficult to distinguish just by appearance alone and this is why we have often misunderstood virtuous people. For example, in the past, there were three monks from Tiantai Mountain in Zhejiang Province, named Han-Shan, Shi-De and Feng-Gan. It was recorded in the Diary of Tiantai Mountain, that at the time, everyone viewed the three monks as suffering from mental disorder because their behavior was so unusual. Nobody would associate with them. This shows how appearances can be so deceiving.

Feng-Gan's job was to pound the rice in order to remove the husks, which was what the Sixth Patriarch of Zen, Master Hui-Neng did while he was in Huangmei. Feng-Gan was actually the transformation body of Buddha Amitabha, who husked the rice to feed everyone. Han-Shan and Shi-De were the transformation bodies of Great Wisdom Bodhisattva and Universal Worthy Bodhisattva. They worked in the kitchen too, lighting fires for the stoves and performing other miscellaneous chores. They went shoeless, dressed raggedly and acted absurdly. No one felt that they were worthy of anything. It is true that judging by appearances alone, it is difficult for ordinary people to differentiate those who are truly virtuous people. Feng-Gan was the one who revealed to us that they were actually transformations of the three great virtuous people.

At that time, there was a local government official, Magistrate Lu, whose mother fell ill while they were travelling to where they were to report to office. Mr. Lu became very anxious after several doctors failed to help his mother. When Feng-Gan was passing through the neighborhood, he sought out Mr. Lu and said, “Someone is ill in your household and I am able to cure that person”. Naturally, the Magistrate felt immense gratitude toward Feng-Gan afterward. He saw that Feng-Gan was a monk and therefore inquired as to which way place he belonged. Feng-Gan replied, “I live in Tiantai Mountain”. Mr. Lu asked, “Are there any sages or virtuous people residing in your way place?” Feng-Gan answered, “Great Wisdom Bodhisattva and Universal Worthy Bodhisattva live there”. Mr. Lu asked, “How will I be able to recognize and learn from them?” Feng-Gan replied, “One is named is

Han-Shan and the other is Shi-De”.

A few days after Magistrate Lu reported to office, he went to Tiantai Mountain to pay his respects to the two great Bodhisattvas. When he got there, he found them in the kitchen doing chores and acting strangely. He immediately knelt on the ground and paid his respects to them. The two monks seemingly ignored him, then quickly turned on their heels and ran. Magistrate Lui ordered his attendants to follow and see where they were going. Then, he saw that the two monks ran to the base of a mountain and the mountain opened up. The two monks backed inside and the mountain closed up again. But, before they vanished inside the mountain, they were heard saying, “Buddha Amitabha talks too much”. Magistrate Lu then realized that Feng-Gan was actually Buddha Amitabha!

The two Bodhisattvas complained that Buddha Amitabha should not have meddled and revealed their true identities. So, these three persons were actually great sages. At that time, the way place held a very important Buddhist ritual twice a month to recite the precepts. Han-Shan and Shi-De often gathered outside the way place, made fun of the other monks and were therefore disliked by everyone. When the other monks realized that Han-Shan and Shi-De were actually the transformation bodies of Bodhisattvas, they then felt ashamed that everyday these three great sages had served them their food. This shows how the "intentions" of Bodhisattvas differ from those of ordinary people.

The heart of a genuinely honorable person is filled with loving-kindness and respect for others. There are thousands of different types of people in this world, some are close to us while others are strangers, some are in high positions while others are in low, some are smart while others are not and some are virtuous while others are corrupt. Nevertheless, they are humans like us and are thus, all one entity. I should neither hate nor disrespect anyone.

The first of the Ten Great Vows of Universal Worthy Bodhisattva is to pay respect to all Buddhas and others. From the aspect of principle, despite the apparent differences among people, all people are one to those who understand. However, from the aspect of phenomenon, of appearance, we know that differences exist. But regardless of this, we are all part of humanity, are all part of one another. Once we realize this, we will truly view others as we view ourselves. The Buddha once said, “Throughout all time and space, there is only the one self”. Thus, the kindness and compassion of the Buddha is “affinity without condition in great kindness and the embodiment of all in great compassion”. This is wisdom, which we would do well to understand, respect and pass on. We should have loving-kindness and respect for all beings, animate and inanimate.

When our hearts are filled with loving-kindness and respect for others, it is the same as if our hearts were filled with loving-kindness and respect for the sages and virtuous people. When we understand and agree with others, it is the same as if we understand and agree with the sages and virtuous people.

In ancient China, people who were well educated knew how to “respect the sages and virtuous people”. This is different from our society today. Our technological society is immersed in greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance. When we show respect, our thoughts and intentions are different from those of the past when this respect was sincere and sages and virtuous people were role models for society. Upon seeing a sage, others would immediately try to correct their behavior in emulation. Today, people often go through the formalities of showing respect to the Bodhisattvas, heavenly beings and spirits, in the hope of gaining something in return. All too often, this is the sole intention.

Mr. Liao-Fan said that understanding and agreeing with other people is the same as understanding and agreeing with the sages and virtuous people. Their main objective is to create goodness and happiness for all people. Who among us would not prefer to live in a peaceful and prosperous society? The Chinese often wish for the "five good fortunes" of (1) wealth and prestige, (2) longevity, (3) merits and virtues, (4) happiness and no adversities and (5) a good death. These are the wishes of virtually everyone in this world. But what most people wish for are the good effects, the good results. What they do not know or have forgotten is that good effects come only after we have accomplished

good causes. If we do not practice good causes and do not perform good deeds, then there is no way that we can expect good results. The sages and virtuous people also want everybody to attain good fortune. The difference is that these virtuous people possess great wisdom whereas we ordinary people are confused and ignorant. This is why the virtuous people teach everyone how to practice good deeds and accumulate merits in order for everyone to receive good fortune.

Practicing goodness and accumulating merits starts from our learning to have loving-kindness and respect for all beings, objects and matters. This loving-kindness and respect must be sincere. This is why the first of the Ten Great Vows of Universal Worthy Bodhisattva is "To respect all Buddhas and others". The first phrase of Book of Rites is "Qu Rite said to respect all". This teaches us how to have sincere respect for everything.

Why? Because all the virtuous people and sages want the people on this earth to obtain what they wish for. Therefore, if we can have loving-kindness and respect for people and help them to achieve in their endeavors, we are doing the job of a sage or a virtuous person.

The sole intention of sages, virtuous people and Bodhisattvas is to teach all beings how to properly obtain what they wish for. For those who are outstanding and intelligent, the virtuous people will try to guide those who wish to be a Buddha or a Bodhisattva. For those who do not wish this, the virtuous people will try to help them achieve what they wish for. Therefore, we too would do well to have loving-kindness and respect for all beings.

What does "helping others to do good" mean? If we threw away raw jade, it would be like any other worthless stone. But if we carve and polish it, it will be transformed into a valuable object.

We need to help others to achieve in their endeavors. Helping others is one of the virtues of our true-nature and enhances our merits. We use jade as an example, because jade is considered one of the most delicate and beautiful stones. If we carve and polish it, it can become a valuable jade object. In ancient times, these were often used as tokens of a promise. The most preferred shape was round and flat with a circular hole in the middle. This was called a "Bi". Another style was called "Guei" and "Zhang". Their use was similar to a memo pad and served as a reminder of something important to be done. Usually, the size of a "Guei" was larger than a "Zhang". Examples of several of these jade objects from different dynasties can be found in the National Palace Museum (in Taiwan). They have extremely high historical value.

So, when we see people whom we feel have good potential for doing a good deed or working towards a proper goal, we can guide, support, praise and encourage them, helping them to succeed in their endeavors.

This is talking about nurturing talented people. When we see others whose hearts are kind and who have a loyal and generous nature, or whose goals in life are good and ethical, then we should help them in every way possible to accomplish their endeavors. We need to encourage them to follow the right path and nurture them until they achieve their objectives.

The Flower Adornment Sutra is a very good example of this. We see Sudhana, who as a student has fifty-three benevolent teachers or spiritual guides. Although he is very young, he is our elder, a senior in high standing. His virtues, merits and knowledge are truly deserving of respect. We can learn much from him. As Sudhana met each of the spiritual guides, he bowed and paid his respects. The spiritual guide would then ask him, "Where did you come from, why did you come here and what is it that you seek?" All fifty-three spiritual guides asked Sudhana the same questions and all received the same answer. Therefore, this phrase makes a very deep impression because it was said repeatedly. The first part of the answer is "I have vowed to attain perfect complete enlightenment and I wish to achieve unsurpassed Bodhi, but I do not know how to practice or what intent to have. Thus, I have come here to ask for your guidance." Making a vow is what we mean by setting a goal. If the goal is worthy and the student is diligent, then we must do our best to help him or her. Therefore, as long as we have a proper goal, then no matter whether the teachings are of this world or beyond, we will have a bright future and great accomplishments. If we see others who have this potential, then we can encourage



and assist them in achieving their endeavors. If they suffer hardships, then we should alleviate their difficulties so they can concentrate on accomplishing their learning.

If others wrongly accuse them, we can try to clear their name and share their burden of slander. Only when we have helped them stand on their feet and become a part of society will we have fulfilled our responsibility in helping others to do good.

During the practice to become a sage, regardless of whether in this world or beyond, people are bound to encounter jealousy and slander. This can create confusion and possibly even discourage them from pursuing their studies. If this were to happen it would truly be tragic. This is when we have to share in their worries. When others slander them, we need to help them to clear their name, to do all we can so that they can stand on their own and become a worthwhile member of society. If we have achieved this then we have accomplished great knowledge, wisdom, virtue and merit. They will then be able to contribute to society partly because we have helped them reach their goal. However many virtues and merits they may accumulate, the person who helped them to achieve will receive an equal amount.

In ancient China, if someone were to recommend a person of great worth to the emperor, that person would be rewarded. Why? Because whenever this person contributed to the country and created benefits for others, it was all because of another's recommendation. The good deeds that have been done by this person are the same as the person who recommended him. Therefore, in ancient China, people often recommended those who were good, filial, honest and talented to the imperial palace so that true talents could be cultivated.

Why would others want to cause trouble for us if we were good? As an old saying goes, "good things do not come easily". There are many obstacles. If someone wants to commit bad deeds, then Mara would be very happy because he loves bad deeds. Not only would he not obstruct the person from wrongdoing, but he would do all he could to help. On the other hand, if we want to perform good deeds that would be going against his wishes so he will do everything he can to deter us.

Mara is one factor, which causes trouble. Another is our own karmic creditors from past lifetimes. When they see that we are practicing well and might transcend the Six Realms of Reincarnation, they want to stop us. This is because we have not yet paid what we owe them from the past. This debt may be money. It may be a life. These creditors will not stand idly by and watch us succeed in our practice but will create obstacles to prevent us from achieving our goal. Thus, the path to awakening is filled with obstacles.

Through innumerable eons, we have created infinite karmic obstacles. How then are we to rid ourselves of them? We should dedicate our daily studies to our karmic creditors, to share our merits with them. By passing these merits on to them, we will have achieved full virtue. What do we want? Nothing. If we do not commit to this vow, it will be difficult for us to achieve awakening without encountering karmic obstacles. When we make this vow, we need to commit to it by following the principles in the Diamond Sutra. We need to sincerely and honestly abide by them.

Most people dislike those who are different from them.

Most of us prefer those who are similar to ourselves. For instance, those who practice Buddhism feel closer to others who are also practicing and more distant from those who are not. This difference is especially noticeable within the family. If our parents and siblings do not practice Buddhism and we are the only vegetarians, then there will be conflicts. This is actually our own fault. It would be helpful to determine what we are doing wrong. Why would other family members disapprove of our practicing Buddhism?

Sometimes, when fellow Buddhists come to visit us it seems that they are very close to us, even closer than our own family. We might appear happier with them than with our own mother. When she sees this, she is bound to feel unhappy. Therefore, we should love and care for our family members in the same way that we do other practitioners. In this way, our family will not oppose our practicing

Buddhism. There are many cases where family conflict has arisen when only one member practiced. Often, that one member did not reflect upon his or her behavior and was blinded to the causes of the discontent. Only when we are watching from the side can we see the problem. If we would only spend some time to reflect, we will easily understand the situation.

When other practitioners come to visit us, we should show even more respect to our parents so that our family will feel better. In this way, they will no longer object to our practice. They might even come to like it and encourage friends and relatives to follow suit. Therefore, when interacting with family members, we should not use “verbal education”, but learn from Emperor Shun and use “behavioral education”. We need to set a good example for them. Then, when they see the good results from practicing Buddhism, they will automatically help us to advocate it.

There are always more bad people around than good people. Therefore, those who are good often have difficulty standing on their own.

Good people comprise one group and bad ones another. The latter has a lot of people and more power. Those who are good are in the minority and have little power. Because of this, they often have problems standing on their own. It becomes more difficult for them to perform good deeds because the bad group will use their power to create obstacles for them. Ever since Buddha Shakyamuni gave us the teachings, the above situation has occurred for each succeeding generation of Buddhists.

After Master Hui-Neng attained enlightenment, he went into hiding with a group of hunters for fifteen years. Why? Because of the jealousy and obstacles, he encountered. Good people often do not have the opportunity to learn. Because those who are bad outnumber those who are good, the former will often be able to obstruct the latter. This is why sometimes when good people are trying to stand on their own, they may not get the opportunity to practice goodness as much as they wish to. Thus, many can only keep themselves unpolluted and pure but lack the strength to help others. If we want them to be able to “do good for the whole world” then those of us who possess wisdom, good fortune and virtue must do our best to help them.

Good people have good abilities and virtues, which allow them to achieve fame. They usually do not care much for their appearance. They can easily be wrongly accused, so striving to do good turns out to be a challenge. When this happens, it is entirely up to virtuous people and elders to protect and help those who are good and need to stand on their own. They can provide what the good people need to practice goodness. The merits of these virtuous people and elders who do this will be great.

Those who have good abilities and virtues that exceed others usually achieve fame. Locally, everyone would know them. In other words, they are highly “renowned”. These people are skilled and talented; however, their life styles are easy going and they do not pay much attention to details. Unfortunately, this often offends others. We know that when we practice Buddhism, we must be extremely respectful towards the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. However, we need not be overly concerned with trivialities. If we pay too much attention to them, it will interfere with our practice. We should feel and show respect; but if we see others who are disrespectful, we should not mind them. In the course of our practice, we need to grasp the main principle, “The pure heart will give rise to the pure land”. Night and day, always remember to chant “Amitufo”. Everything else is insignificant.

If we are older and less agile, then it is not necessary to kneel when reciting a sutra. We need to not attach to formalities. To seek a bond between Buddha Amitabha and ourselves is of the utmost importance. We can continue our practice even when we are lying down. If we are weak or aged, we can use the most comfortable position while chanting “Amitufo” or reciting the sutra; kneeling, sitting or walking. If we feel weak, we can lie down and listen to the sutra on a tape. Lying in bed listening to the sutra or chanting “Amitufo” can achieve the same merits as when we are sitting or walking. But we must remember not to chant aloud while lying down because it is harmful to our health.

Mahayana Buddhism is liberal, without many restrictions. So what are all the rituals and rules for? They are used for others. It is “behavioral education” to initiate respect from others and to motivate

their wish to practice Buddhism. Theravada Buddhism, on the other hand, emphasizes the formalities. Mahayana focuses on the “mind”, not on matters.

Exceptionally talented people are not bothered by minor details and consequently, can easily offend others and cause gossip. Therefore, “attempts to do good deeds often fail” because good people often suffer from accusations and slander. When this happens, those who are trying to do good must depend on virtuous people or an elder with wisdom and virtue to help them overcome their difficulties so that they can truly contribute to society. The virtuous people and the elders will achieve the greatest merit because they are not helping just an individual, but all of society so that everyone may enjoy the same good fortune. This is truly a great merit.

If we were able to encourage, nurture and help a Dharma master so that he or she could teach Buddhism to others, the merits would be incomparable. However, many people do not know this. They believe that if they donate money to restore a Buddhist way place, the merits would be greater. Actually, such merit is limited. In fact, sometimes we may even have committed a bad deed although we had good intentions. Therefore, only in nurturing talented people have we truly achieved great merit. Only with these masters can we guarantee the propagation of the teachings so that Buddhism will never be forgotten in our world.

It is extremely difficult to encourage and help talented teachers of Buddhism. They must seek self-enlightenment as well as help others to achieve enlightenment. Their minds must be pure and non-discriminatory without selfish thoughts. These are the necessary qualities for someone to teach Buddhism. If we do encounter such a true Buddhist successor, we should do our utmost to help him or her. Once this person is accomplished and is able to contribute greatly to Buddhism, the merits we have achieved in helping will be equal to his or her own.

In our present society, why are there so few people teaching Buddhism? The opportunity to do so may have not yet presented itself. Or the individuals may not be sincerely dedicated to propagating the teachings to help all beings. The vow, the quality of some people is dubious and flawed. And often laypeople like to flatter and listen to older masters and do not go to listen to newer ones. This can cause the newer masters to become discouraged so that they might turn to conducting ceremonies. This happens because the laypeople did not fulfill their responsibilities in providing proper opportunities. Therefore, when newer masters vow to lecture on the sutras, we should go and listen if what they teach is accurate.

However, if their teachings are inaccurate, then we should not listen so that they can see the reactions of others and learn to reflect and correct their faults. Once they have corrected these faults, we can then listen to them and encourage them to propagate the teachings. This is the proper way to praise newer masters and encourage them in their vows to pursue enlightenment. We must provide a suitable learning environment for them. The value of this merit is boundless because it can truly extend the life of Buddhism.

**Web link to the article:** <http://www.amtb.cn/e-bud/chinese/chinese.htm>

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