

Gratitude for the Buddha's Wisdom

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Tuesday, 22 May 2012 17:20



[[Master's Teachings](#)]

Buddha Day is a day of deep and sacred meaning. It is a day when we remember what the Buddha's coming into the world brings to humanity and to our lives. Throughout the ages, many saints have appeared in the world to guide people and enable them to live a life of wisdom. Their teachings have become the world's great religions. Just as there is Christmas to celebrate the birth of Jesus, on Buddha Day, we commemorate the birth of the Buddha.

Truly, if the Buddha had not come into our world, what would life be like? If we did not have Buddha's wisdom guiding us, how would our lives be now?

Why do we need the Buddha's teachings? In our world today, great advancements are being made in science and technology. On the surface, everything looks wonderful—humankind seems to be making great strides forward, achieving progress and creating prosperity. But in reality, behind all this development and progress lie the seeds of crisis. In the pursuit of economic development, we have destroyed our natural environment and Nature's orderly system has become disrupted. Our land is increasingly fragile, and the climate is becoming more and more erratic. At the same time, in our modern, materialistic world, the hearts and minds of people are changing—moral values are weakening, honesty and goodness are thinning out, and people are increasingly selfish, greedy, and lacking in basic character.

Yet few of us see this true state of affairs. Going about our normal lives as we do, how little we realize what we are in reality doing. We are blindly led around by our greed and desires, our anger and hatreds, and our ignorance and delusions.

That is why the Buddha came to teach us. He wanted us to understand that when we are driven by greed, anger, and delusion, we do many things that go against life's principles and in doing this, we create negative karma. The law of cause and effect is a natural law; by creating negative karma, we will reap its retribution. This retribution is why we experience so many problems and suffering.

But it doesn't have to be this way. If we can purify our heart and mind of greed, anger, and delusion and work on changing our wrong behavior, we can create a better life for ourselves, a life full of wisdom and blessings. Not only that, we can also help bring about a peaceful world where everyone both lives in harmony with love and goodness in their hearts, and in well-being without disasters and man-made calamities. This is all possible if we can follow the Buddha's teachings and use them to cleanse away our inner impurities, cultivate ourselves, and through our example, inspire others to join us in doing the same.

Everything begins within the mind, and by changing our mind and then our behavior we can turn many bad situations around. This is the truly precious teaching that the Buddha gave us. It opens up infinite possibilities for humankind.

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On Buddha Day, with hearts of gratitude, we remember the wisdom that the Buddha has brought us. We renew our vows to practice his teachings—to lead a more enlightened life and do what good we can to contribute to the wellbeing of all. Then, our world of turmoil can be turned into a wonderful Pure Land.

From Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Talks
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