



VIDEO LINK:

**Reverence arises from deep within, connecting to every thought. I pray with sincerity.**

Time flies by quickly. We must make good use of every second. Every second, we should have the utmost reverence in our hearts. With deep reverence, our hearts will connect with the universe. Our minds and the Buddha's mind are connected. It is often said that everyone has the same innate Buddha-nature as the Buddha. Connecting with this innate awareness all depends on having the utmost reverence.

“With reverence, heart and heaven are connected. With pure good will for others, we can accomplish anything.” In dealing with people and affairs, we want people to have faith that our collected energy is quite powerful. The reason we believe in



the Buddha is that He came to the world and perfected His character. So, the Buddha has great power. Why do we say He is powerful? Because He perfected His character. No matter how He taught the Dharma, everyone believed in His teachings. Therefore, as we learn the Buddha's way, we must perfect our character. To achieve character like the Buddha's, we must be sincere with people.

Only when we have perfected our character can we attain Buddhahood. And in order to establish our character, we must be sincere with others. This is the way to build character. If we are pretentious or hypocritical, we do not have good character. So we must be earnest and sincere. When we are earnest, we can accomplish anything. So we must believe that there are watchful spirits above us. In my previous lectures, I talked about the eight classes of Dharma protectors and other supernatural beings; they are all around us. "Our sincere prayers will reach the Buddhas." In our interactions with others, every word we speak is not only for them, but also for the Buddhas. Not only do we speak to the Buddhas, we also speak to the eight classes of Dharma protectors and all sorts of demons and monsters. So every time the Buddha gave a teaching, as described in the Sutras, millions of beings gathered to hear Him, including the eight classes of Dharma protectors, demons, heavenly beings and deities.

They all came to listen to the teachings. We hope that our words are worthy of being listened to by people, demons, and the eight classes of Dharma protectors. So we must speak truthfully and from the heart. We are accountable for our speech. This is why I always say we should be reverent and sincere. We should also be vigilant and disciplined.

We should strive to let everyone know that we must all speak kind words and think kind thoughts. Only when we pray sincerely can we eliminate natural disasters and bring peace to everyone.



**With reverence, the heart and heaven connect. If one is sincere with people, one can do anything. We must believe spirits hover above our heads. Sincere prayers will reach the Buddhas.**

We have said before that we should “be reverent in every thought and pray sincerely.” This is what have discussed. We must let reverence arise in our hearts. We must constantly be mindful and reverent. Wherever our bodies are, our minds should be there as well. If we are sincerely reverent, two kinds of thoughts arise. What are these two kinds of thoughts?

**The first is to “Contemplate that this physical life of mine is hard to keep.”  
“Once it decays, I do not know when I can regain human form.”**

Life is truly impermanent. The Sutras often remind us that we should always keep this in mind. So it says “this physical life of mine.” This “physical life” refers to our bodies. All living creatures have different appearances. Although we are all humans with heads, arms and legs, we all look quite different. Humans are not the only living beings; there are also other living beings on Earth.

When we look at the Abode, we see that besides human beings, we also have Da-bao, Shan-lai, and other types of dogs that come here often. There are many types of dogs. This is what we mean by “physical life.” Life is impermanent for all beings. However, we need to constantly remind ourselves that it is impossible to stay alive forever. We should also remind ourselves that when we were children, we looked like children. But we could not maintain that appearance forever. When we see a child we often comment on how cute and adorable he is. Cuteness will not last forever. The child will grow up and become a teenager. Does a teenager look as innocent and cute as a child? Teenagers perceive



themselves as grown-ups, with youth and beauty. Can they remain young and beautiful forever? It is impossible to remain young forever.

After adolescence they become young adults. As adults we feel we can accomplish anything. We have completed our studies, established our career, and have physical strength. Can we maintain this forever? No, we cannot. After young adulthood, we enter middle age. Can we stay middle-aged forever? Our career is stable, our income is growing, and our thoughts are maturing. Can we stay like that forever? That is impossible.

Then we enter old age. Before long, we have reached old age without our awareness.

With old age come some physical symptoms. Our vision blurs, our arms and legs become less nimble. It becomes harder to kneel down and prostrate to the Buddha. Not just a little bit harder, but quite difficult. How long does this stage last? When the body stops functioning, all senses and consciousnesses are gone and they body starts to decay “I do not know when I can regain human form.” When will we be reborn as human? We often say [of the dying], “Let us bless him so that he can return quickly. Once departed, let him come back quickly and be born as a little Bodhisattva.” This is our hope.

We often say we are blessed to be born human. Within the Six Destinies, to be born human is very rare. Within a human body, can we learn the Buddha-Dharma, listen to the true teachings? Can we be exposed to the Buddha’s teachings? Will we have the opportunity to hear His teachings and walk on the Bodhisattva-path? It depends on if we are sincere. We must be earnest, careful, and mindful of our thoughts. Wherever our minds lead us, we should always be mindful and completely sincere. Pay respect to the Buddha as if He were present. Respect everyone as if they were Buddhas. We should always be grateful for everything



and treat others with love. This is the heart of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. So be mindful at every moment. We must be mindful at every moment so that even though our bodies deteriorate and we die, when we come back, we will still have the same mindset.

So, always be present and mindful of your conduct. This Buddha and Bodhisattva mindset will come with us in our next life. We must make use of this precious human body to practice on the Bodhisattva-path. We must “Always contemplate impermanence.” We should always be aware of this and always contemplate it. We should always be mindful of impermanence. So, we must train our minds to always remember that this human body is hard to come by. Human life is not forever. Human life is not forever. The physical body is important. Throughout our lives, from childhood to old age, our bodies go through many stages. Will we look the same tomorrow? The body is constantly metabolizing and changing. The body we have today is different than that of yesterday. So, our physical appearance is constantly changing.

**We must contemplate the impermanence of the body. Once the body decays, the Four Elements disintegrate.** The Four Elements are Earth, Water, Fire and Wind. Our body is like the Earth. It cannot be without water or air. Without air, we cannot breathe. Nor can we survive without the fire element. Without it, our bodies cannot maintain their warmth. We cannot survive without the Earth element. Without it, we cannot maintain our muscles. Our medical college will not accept Silent Mentors that weigh less than 40 kilograms. So our bodies need the Four Elements. Some people try to lose weight. If you lose too much, then the Earth element is out of balance and you become too skinny.

If all Four Elements are out of balance, the body starts to deteriorate. Even if we attain human form again, “we may not meet Buddhas, noble and sacred beings.”



If we can regain human form, but cannot hear the Buddha-Dharma, when we encounter unwholesome friends, we will create evil connections. When bad friends come along they lead us astray. If we have few good affinities and many bad ones, we go astray easily.

Even if we can regain human form, we are in danger of not meeting the Buddha and noble and sacred beings. If we meet bad friends and continue to create negative karma, we will regress and fall into the deep pit of the Evil Destiny of Hell.

We have often heard of drug addicts who have already been to rehab. Their connections with Tzu Chi brought them in. When talking with them we often hear them say, "I have already changed. I know that doing Tzu Chi work is good, but I just don't have the will power. Once my old friends call me, I lose control and follow them.

These are friends who drink, gamble or do drugs. Once reconnected with bad friends, they may follow their evil affinities. This is most worrisome. If so, they will not remain pure of the thought. This concerns us the most. If we repeat this often and continue to create negative karma, then we will still fall into the deep pit of the Evil Destiny of Hell. Once lost, the human form is difficult to regain.

Everyone, Since we are blessed to have this precious human body and can engage in cultivation, we should always be mindful of impermanence. If we do not make use of this body now, when will we ever have the opportunity to give to and help others again?

Life is impermanent. This is the natural course of life. We can only follow this natural law. This physical life is hard to keep. As we follow the natural course of



life, the most important thing is that we are blessed and have good affinities. So we must grasp this chance and always remember to be present. What should we be mindful of? Having utmost reverence and sincerity in our interactions with people or things. In dealing with people or affairs, our hearts need to connect with heaven and all the Dharma protectors. We must remember that these beings are always around us.

Deep in our hearts, we must know that. We must believe that, aside from our conscience, there are watchful spirits everywhere. What are these spirits? They are the eight classes of Dharma protectors and all sorts of demons and ghosts. Always remember that when we do things, heaven is watching us. Therefore, we should speak kind words and think good thoughts with a reverent and sincere heart. So, please always be mindful.

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