

Your Karma Comes First

October 5, 2017

We live in a world where there are lots of wrong views: people who don't observe the precepts, people who don't understand the principles of goodness. We live surrounded by them, and it's very easy to get swayed by them.

This is one of the reasons why we practice, one of the reasons why we meditate, so that we don't get swayed by bad examples around us. We're convinced of the value that the real treasures that we have are our virtue, our concentration, our sense of shame and compunction, the effort we put into the practice. These are our treasures, because they really do have value.

There are times when in following the precepts we may lose out in terms of the goods of the world. But those goods aren't really good for long, and then what you're left with after they've gone is the karma of having gone against the precepts, which is nothing good you want to carry around.

So make sure that your karma comes first. No matter how upset society gets, how strange things get out there in the world, you want to hold on to your treasures inside, the goodness that you develop and the goodness that you can keep on developing—even when it's difficult—because the goodness is what's going to win out in the end, in terms of the good results it'll give in your life.

This is the nature of the goodness that the Buddha taught. It's good in the past, good in the present, good in the future. In other words, you think of times when you've been virtuous in the past and been generous in the past, and the mind gets a sense of well-being. As you're in the process of being virtuous, in the process of being generous, meditating, the mind is light. It's not heavy with the knowledge of knowing that you're doing something bad. You know you're doing something good. And as for the future, you can be confident that the results in the future are going to be good for a long time to come. That's the kind of goodness the Buddha taught.

So when we develop that goodness inside, that becomes our genuine treasure. Don't let anything else in the world get you to let go of that pleasure. Hold on to it as tight as you can.