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False “False Monastics” & True “False Monastics”

We read in the papers (Straits Times, 2007) of “false monks and nuns” masquerading in robes to collect donations from unsuspecting and soft-hearted people. Since they are not monastics in the first place, they are actually the false “false monks and nuns”.

In fact, they are inspired by the examples of the true “false monks and nun” who have all the comfort and things that lay people have and enjoy, and much more. Have you ever met a “poor” monk today (except for the forest monks, perhaps)?

The money priests of today live in comfortable palatial mansions called temples, complete with all the convenience of a modern home, drive around in their own cars, have large bank accounts, own considerable property and businesses, and enjoy sense-pleasures, which even the average layperson does not.

We hardly see the alms bowl of such priests. The point is that even good karma soon runs out. The moneytheistic priests say they need money to be independent: independent of what? The Buddha and the early monastics were truly independent — even of money and property.

The moneytheistic priests say that they need money so that they can do good works. What about keeping the monastic precepts of the Buddha? That’s the best work and duty for a Buddhist monastic or priest.

It is the monastic rules that make a monastic. What is football without football rules? What is a country without laws?

The Buddha in the Suttas sits on a pile of grass to meditate, and lives a simple life of abstinence and wisdom, teaching others compassionately to overcome suffering.

What are the benefits of living a simple life, even as a lay person? In fact, we can say that it is easier today to awaken to spiritual liberation as a lay person – at least, we try to keep to the 5 precepts.

Let us remind and empower ourselves with the Buddha's simple lifestyle and teachings that bring us awakening in this life itself (even for a lay person). For those who wait, may not get the chance to be reborn as a human being at all.

Not being awakened is like being stricken with a chronic serious illness and not knowing it. Let us start taking the Dharma medicine *now*, and be the growing number of practitioners who *know* they will attain awakening in this life itself.

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