

GOD – Gift of Dhamma

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For those who us who want to be good Buddhists, but who have been dominated by Christianity or some God-belief since we can well remember, this is another way to “naturally adapt” ourself to true love—the love of Dhamma. **The love of Dhamma** is a keen curiosity about our own self: how we think, how we feel, how we act. And we become curious about others, too. It is about knowing self and others.

Why we are happy, why we are sad; why we are good, why we are bad. In early Buddhism, we do not speak of “sin” (man’s worst idea attributed to God); we do not often speak of “evil” (another God-believer’s nightmare), both of which we should not be infected with. For the love of Dhamma, we try to only use words and ideas that help us understand our self.

To understand our self, that is, our heart, our mind, is to gradually tame it. To tame the self is to understand that we are our actions—we are what we do or do not do. Yet, all our actions pass just like our thoughts and feelings. As the years pass, we change our thoughts, our feelings change, too; we keep changing and growing. Those who hold on to old negative ideas do not grow.

Thinking and feeling

To **think** is to let our mind work with any of our 5 senses—we see and we think about what we see; we hear and we think about what we hear; we smell and we think about it; we taste and we think about it; we touch or feel and think about it. We think with the media of words, ideas – and language. We form views, and like weeds, our views grow and crowd our mind and clog our heart.

To feel, in early Buddhist terms, is to experience something directly, like touching a cup of tea and knowing it IS hot or cold. Although feeling occurs through one of our senses, like thinking, feeling does not get caught up with that sense, but goes, as it were, directly to the sense-object.

Conditioned

Something interesting happens when we truly feel. When we touch that cup of tea and feel that it is, say, warm. The warmth is in the cup of tea, yes. But when our hands are very cold (like when we are in some really cold weather), we love the tea-cup’s warmth. In other words, our feeling of the cup of tea is relative, conditioned by our thoughts (mind).

The level of warmth—even the warmth itself—occurs in our mind. The same goes for all the other sense-experiences. Take sounds, for example. We are distracted by sounds because we follow them, and stray away from what is at hand. The source of the sound (for us) is not out there but in the ear. Notice when we are really focused,

say, in meditation, we are not distracted by any sound, or any sense-stimulation, for that matter.

The Mind

We have spoken about the physical senses. Now **the mind**, the 6th sense. The mind creates its own views and values of what we sense. The mind defines what we experience. When we, say, meet someone for the first time (or any time actually), our mind quickly checks our past experiences of a similar “person.”

When the mind recalls a nasty experience with that “person” in the past we are made to dislike that person present before us. When the mind has some good past memories of someone like that person, we are pushed to like that person before us. And when we seem to have no record of any experience of such a person, we may ignore that person, as he means “nothing” to us. And so the mind measures and manages our other sense-experiences in similar ways.

Change

One thing is sure of all these experiences, whether they are physical or mental. They are all our experiences of CHANGE. All experiences and existences happen in change. Whatever exists must exist in change, in time. (Hence, there are no eternal God or Buddhas.)

We usually do not notice change because our mind is out “there,” measuring its sense-object. However, when we carefully examine how we think—even some time after the fact—we will learn interesting things about our self.

Often enough, if we are quick-minded enough, we may even nip a problem in the bud. For example, we notice we are ANGRY. If we glare at the person we are angry with, we are likely to feed the anger (finding faults with that person) and end up being violent.

But, when we “stop” and look at our own anger, we will notice that (1) it is a nasty feeling (raised blood pressure and heart-rate; flushed face; bodily tension, etc); (2) we don’t look good (try taking a selfie when we are angry and look at it!).

And when we tell ourself calmly: “I am angry. This is not good. I letting this anger go!” Even at the first sentence, half the anger is gone, and the rest easily peters out. It helps even better when we think of the goodness of this person, or we show lovingkindness to this person—accept him as he is. In other words, we can change our self (mind/heart) ourself!

Gift of Dhamma

This is the GOD—the Gift of Dhamma—the Buddha has wisely and compassionately given us. GOD is not to be worshipped but to be practised with kindness and

goodness. This GOD does not start religions or cause wars; he does not demand adoration and prayers—he ends religion and brings wisdom; he ends wars and brings peace.

This GOD belongs to no one. Yet can be in anyone—we only need to understand that we are nothing but our 6 senses—the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Or, briefly, we are body (the 5 physical senses) and mind. When we understand and tame our mind, our senses will follow, too. This is the precious Gift of Dhamma from the Buddha. This is the Godliness in us

If we are raised to believe in God, now we have a deeper and more personal experience of what Godliness is. We can be Godly and good, a true human with divine qualities. Our body may be human and frail but our mind is divine, and will awaken to true liberation. Just like the Buddha and the great saints after him. Enjoy GOD, the Gift of Dhamma, and freely share it with others.

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