

Getting lighter

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Buddhism gets heavier the more we know it, especially when it is about getting entitled in various ways. The Buddha Dhamma gets lighter as we understand it, especially when we live it and see ourself closer to the path of awakening. The former sees Buddhism as a title, the bigger the better outwardly; the latter sees Dhamma as renunciation, life gets simpler, yet richer inwardly.

If Buddhism is about the palaces of praise, glory, wealth and maybe heaven, Buddha Dhamma is about going through the doors of impermanence, suffering and non-self. Then, we rise above the subhuman worlds, better the human world, even go beyond heaven to taste the freedom of nirvana here and now.

Faith-follower, truth-follower

In our times, it seems that Buddhists are those who believe that awakening is impossible: we fan a famous teacher (self), do the right things to be socially accepted (attachment to rituals and vows) and worship the truth out there (doubt). We tend to see Buddhism in a power-mode. Love and good are merely rituals and showmanship for mileage in a competitive religious market; Buddhism, a commodity that is bought and sold; a hobby for the affluent and flippant.

Those who are courageous enough follow the Buddha's teaching as **faith-followers** (strong in faith) or as **truth-followers** (bent on wisdom). As faith followers, we accept **impermanence** as a given truth and work to understand Dhamma so that our lives get simpler and freer. As truth-followers, we search the suttas and watch the world so that we better understand our self to be truly and fully free.

The 3 doors

Both faith-followers and the truth-followers will reach the 3 doors of **samadhi** that open into the path of awakening. If our **faith** is strong, it is very easy for us to reflect on **impermanence**. As we age, it becomes even easier to see impermanence and see through all the false signs and veneer of permanence. We dismantle all our views and pains, what we have constructed for ourself through self-image, superstition and doubt. It's all impermanent.

If we are inclined to **wisdom** and learning, we can joyfully work to understand the **emptiness** of everything. As we mature in years, we understand better how we put together various views making Buddhism more complicated, instead of simplifying it; more superstitious, instead of being self-reliant. We deconstruct our views and pains. We understand that there is no abiding essence in anything in this universe. All is non-self.

Concentration

In either case, whether we are strong in faith or in wisdom, as we understand Dhamma better, we move on to see **suffering** clearer. We understand how our mind is never free

because we had no choice but to be directed by desires (a sense of lack). Hence, we look for pleasant objects; reject what we see as unpleasant; ignore what we do not understand.

Desire makes us chase and collect what we see as pleasures of the pleasant; running away from what we view as the sufferings of the unpleasant; and ignoring the true reality right before us. Then, as our mind becomes calmer and clearer, we simply let it be, **undirected**. Our mind sees truth and beauty in itself, happy and blissful for itself. The world is suffering; our mind is not.

Back to basics

This is only our journey plan and the joy in anticipation of our travels. Now is the time to prepare ourselves and start our real journey. We begin by opening the door of **impermanence** and looking ahead. We see and accept all there is, including ourselves as being impermanent. We accept this with **faith**, or examine it deeper with **wisdom**. Either way, we keep moving: it's all impermanent.

We see the impermanence of all our views. We leave behind the suffering that such views entail. We free ourselves of the desire to have or own the world. The world is not ours: we must let it be. This is the only way to grow and grow free.

As we journey towards the path of awakening, we feel lighter, it gets lighter. We feel lighter because our burdens get less. It gets lighter because the Dhamma sun is rising before us, showing us the true path of awakening to the beautiful ancient city of the awakened. We can already feel the peace and joy even just to think of this.

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