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## **Practical Advice for Pure Land Practitioners**

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# Practical Advice for Pure Land Practitioners

*A discourse by Master Huijing, to visiting Dharma  
friends from Xiamen, April 7, 2017*

Namo Amitabha, Namó Amitabha, Namó Amitabha!

Amitabha Buddha exists to deliver sentient beings, and this recitation association exists to carry forward the message of his deliverance. Therefore every such organization is our home. So welcome home, our Pure Land lotus friends from Xiamen!

Today, we'll just chat. Everyone please relax.

The purpose of life is to utilize our brief time in this world to study Buddhism. It is to seek liberation from the endless cycle of birth and death, so-called samsara.

If there were no afterlife and death means nothingness, there would be no retribution or reward,

no causation of the past, present and future, no transmigration in the Six Realms (heavens, asuras, humans, animals, ghosts and hells). There would be no need to study Buddhism. We should by all means enjoy our lives thoroughly.

However, such is not the case with life and the universe. Karmic retribution, causation and the cycle of rebirth all exist.

Over innumerable eons, we have performed good and evil deeds. They determine whether our next life will be spent as a human, animal, hungry ghost, in a hell or in a heaven. The probability of rebirth in a celestial realm is extremely small, and even human form is hard to gain. That is why Sakyamuni Buddha said that rebirth as a human is rare.

That is to say, it would be hard to be a human again in our coming lives. Does that mean we would likely be reborn in the Three Wretched Realms? Indeed, it does. Going by the Law of Causation, wholesome actions may lead to rebirth in the heavens while unwholesome deeds could induce birth in a hell domain. These are the principles behind karmic consequences of past, present

and future, as well as rebirth in the Six Realms. The principles are the bedrock of Buddhism, which then teaches ways to transcend this cycle of rebirth.

Without such a foundation, there can be no Buddhism. When we speak the Dharma we must emphasize its fundamentals. Otherwise, it would be a deviation from Buddhism. The principles are the foundation of Buddhism, of the Dharma.

Because samsara exists and its essence is suffering and unease, leaving it behind means liberation from suffering. What is there after such liberation? Things would be beautiful and marvelous, as we would no longer be subject to rebirth in the Six Realms and all types of suffering. We would be forever healthy and long-lived. Such longevity would be eternal, transcending time.

If a lifespan had a limit, it would not be eternal, for death would end it. So all longevity is short-lived, compared with the eternal life of those freed from samsara. If life remains mired in the sufferings of a physical body and bound to a sickbed, can it be a happy one? Not only would we suffer greatly, we would also impose a big burden on those who look after us. It doesn't

matter in which of the Six Realms we were born. Even in the celestial domain, there is suffering from the five kinds of decay.

If we were liberated from samsara, however, all our afflictions would cease. Not only would we live eternally and be perfectly happy, we would also possess special powers. We would be able to fly, transform ourselves, go anywhere, and do and have whatever we wish. This truly agreeable state is the state of liberation and the realm of Buddhahood.

Such a state is not something we can create or pursue externally. We all naturally possess such powers and wisdom because they are part of our Buddha-nature. Unfortunately, it is shrouded by our karma and attachments. It will manifest itself once we break away from the bondage of afflictions, such as greed, anger and ignorance.

However, it is impossible to exit samsara and terminate the cycle of rebirth by our own efforts. What to do? We must seek deliverance elsewhere – from Amitabha Buddha. The deliverance of Amitabha is simple and easy, but most people find it hard to believe. Not just that;

many also doubt the very basis of Buddhism: positive and negative karma having corresponding consequences; the Law of Causation being operative in the past, present and future; and rebirth in the Six Realms.

Think about it. Currently there are seven billion people on earth. Less than a seventh may have heard about Buddhism or have a positive impression of it, but even fewer possesses the karmic conditions to accept and learn the Dharma. A true Buddhist must believe in cause and effect as well as rebirth. He must take refuge in the Three Gems: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. And she must cultivate the path of liberation from samsara.

The path we cultivate is Pure Land. Simply put, the Pure Land path is recitation of Amitabha Buddha's name.

It is said there are 84,000 Dharma paths in Buddhism. In China, they have been organized into eight branches: Tiantai, Ch'an (Zen), Esoteric, Huayan, Yogacara (Consciousness-Only), Sanlun (Three Treatises), Precepts, and Pure Land. Why should we study Pure Land, and recite the name of only one Buddha -- Amitabha? Because the other traditions require individuals' own efforts to seek liberation. They must cultivate the

precepts, mediation and wisdom, and eradicate the Three Poisons of greed, anger and ignorance. Why eliminate the Poisons? Because they lead us to create karmic causes, entrapping us in the Six Realms of samsara. As long as the Three Poisons have not been eradicated, there is no liberation.

Think about it: Can we achieve liberation through our own efforts? No. This may be hard for Buddhist beginners to appreciate. If they haven't practiced self-cultivation, they would not know whether it is easy or hard. Only after doing so do they realize it is difficult. That's why many who have turned to Pure Land are those who practiced for some time. After three to five years, or ten to 20 years, they realize they just aren't up to the task. For example, to travel from this shore to the opposite one, we could swim, or ride a bamboo raft or a regular boat. But only after disembarking does it strike us that we lack the stamina to swim across. Moreover, there are large waves. Even a sturdy boat may sink half-way.

That's to say, all other the Buddhist schools rely on self-power to achieve liberation. It's like swimming or rowing a boat to the distant shore. Only Pure Land

practitioners depend entirely on Amitabha Buddha's ship of the Fundamental Vow for their deliverance. The vessel is also called the ship of the Great Vow, which means it is expansive and broad. The ship is huge and strong, capable of riding out the seas of suffering in samsara's Six Realms. And riding on the vessel is so easy that everyone can do it.

Worldly affairs invariably depend on conditions and abilities. Only Amitabha Buddha's deliverance, love, compassion and supernal powers are given to us without requiring anything in return. In fact, Amitabha Buddha is offering them on his own initiative. He even implores us to accept his deliverance. The Pure Land path is simply Amitabha asking us, waiting for us to accept his deliverance. That is why Pure Land is completely different from the other schools of Buddhism.

A long, long time ago, Amitabha Buddha made his 48 Vows on our behalf. He spent countless eons cultivating the ascetic practices of the Bodhisattva path, accumulating them for our sake. This was not at our behest. When Amitabha made his vows, we didn't know where we would reincarnate – in the domain of hell,

hungry ghosts or animals. As he was accumulating merit for us, we weren't aware where we were committing bad karma. Amitabha Buddha has accomplished and fulfilled his vows, and built for us a comfortable home in the Land of Bliss, as well as a "ship of great vows" to take us there from the Saha world. Therefore his ship is ours, as well as his Land of Bliss.

Amitabha Buddha has been calling out to us for more than ten *kalpas* (when he gained Buddhahood). He began doing that countless eons ago, when undertook his vows and began to practice. It is important for us to know that he has attained Buddhahood and completed his Land of Bliss as well as the method to get there. We must also be psychologically prepared to return to the home that he has prepared for us.

Actually, when the Pure Land was completed ten eons ago, we should have been reborn there. We would have been freed and become a Buddha. Most unfortunately, we were not reborn in the Land of Bliss during those ten *kalpas*. We should have been reborn there, as Amitabha became a Buddha for our sake and accomplished the Pure Land for us. He gained Buddhahood in order to deliver

us. But out of ignorance or doubt, we did not accept him. For ten eons we have been reincarnating continually and suffering needlessly.

So, what is Pure Land Buddhism? It is the Dharma path of acceptance and accommodation. It is to:

- Accept the deliverance of Amitabha Buddha
- Accommodate the deliverance of Amitabha Buddha
- Agree to the deliverance of Amitabha Buddha

For ten *kalpas*, Amitabha Buddha has been imploring us, waiting for us to nod our heads, agree in our hearts and say yes with our mouths. He has been waiting and waiting until today.

Pure Land Buddhism speaks of "faith, aspiration and practice." What is faith? If we only believe that "there exists a Land of Bliss" and "there is Amitabha Buddha," such a belief isn't adequate. What is? It is, as mentioned earlier, to believe that Amitabha Buddha exists for our sake; that he undertook his vows and practice on our behalf; and that he accomplished the Land of Bliss for us and even registered ownership and usage rights in our name. So to be reborn there is like returning home --

natural and with no conditions. To believe this is to have sufficient, true faith.

What is aspiration? It has two implications: to wish for and to be willing. Generally speaking, to wish for something is to hope for a certain outcome. For instance, I wish in the future that I will be a government minister or a scientist. I have such an aspiration, but it is uncertain whether I can realize it. We rely on our best efforts. But however hard we work, we cannot be certain of success.

Willingness means if something is offered to me, I am prepared to accept it. Amitabha Buddha's deliverance is like that. He asks and pleads with us, sentient beings of the ten directions, to accept his deliverance and awaits our assent.

So the words "wishing for" and "willing" have quite different meanings and degrees of difficulty. One refers to a future that requires hard work and is uncertain. The other indicates something that's already accomplished, requiring no painstaking effort. All we need do is say "yes," and all its merit is ours. This is what "aspiration" means in Pure Land Buddhism. By being willing to accept the deliverance of Amitabha Buddha, we receive all the

merit and virtues he accomplished and accumulated.

The Land of Bliss is Amitabha Buddha's gift to us. He has also dedicated to us, free of charge, the merit and virtues needed for rebirth there. For ten *kalpas*, he has been waiting for us to accept them. If we do, even by silently nodding our assent, we would at once become denizens of his Pure Land, no longer iniquitous beings trapped in the Saha world's cycle of rebirth.

Of course, everything must be based on sincerity. When we speak of faith, is it true belief or false belief? When we talk about aspiration to rebirth, is it real aspiration or fake aspiration? We must be sincere – genuinely accepting Amitabha's deliverance, wanting rebirth in the Land of Bliss, and wishing to leave samsara's rebirth cycle. We must have such sincerity.

Even so, we have to ask: What is sincerity? It's actually quite simple. Every person should just make sincere resolutions based on his or her own karmic inclinations and abilities. For ordinary beings, it just means avoiding what's pretentious or false. It does not require the purified mind of a Buddha. That would be beyond our capabilities, requiring enlightenment and

the eradication of afflictions. The sincerity we're talking about here is merely to avoid false feelings and intentions.

Some people say Amitabha-recitation must be done with a pure mind. In fact, ordinary beings simply aren't capable of cultivating a pure mind. So long as we can be reborn in the Land of Bliss, however, we will develop one naturally. And that we can do, in this Saha world, by sincerely and genuinely accepting Amitabha's deliverance.

For the sake of sentient beings, Amitabha Buddha spent more than five *kalpas* contemplating and formulating his 48 Vows. He then spent countless eons practicing the way of the Bodhisattva, accomplishing what's hard and bearing what's difficult to bear. Every bit of this, he accomplished for us. So let us not disappoint Amitabha Buddha, and live up to his expectations. Why not for once just accede to his wish and see for ourselves what the Land of Bliss is like? If we do not like it, we can just return to the Saha world. (Laughter.)

So let's go to the Land of Bliss, good or bad. Once we have agreed to do so, all we need do is recite Amitabha's name. Must we recite to a certain standard?

No. It's fine just to recite according to our personal conditions and ability. Amitabha knows very well our capabilities and whether we are truly reciting his name. If so, he will embrace us without letting go. If not, we are not really willing to accept his deliverance.

Some say, "If there is aspiration, practice will follow." Practice is to recite "Namo Amitabha Buddha." How to recite and how many times a day depends on our personal circumstances and proclivities. It's the same regarding whether to recite the six-character version ("Namo Amitabha Buddha") or the four-character one ("Amitabha Buddha").

Those who are young and healthy should recite the more complete six characters. Why? Because "Namo" represents Amitabha's calling out to us, as well as our agreement to accept his deliverance. It also means that we our abandon our defiled, iniquitous and impermanent life, and turn towards a pure, meritorious and happy eternal life.

"Namo" is a Sanskrit term that means "homage to" or "to take refuge in." If our physical condition permits, we should recite "Namo Amitabha Buddha." But those who



are old and weak, or lying down, should recite “Amitabha Buddha.” If we are in advanced old age, in pain or very weak, we may simply recite “Buddha.” On the verge of death, when our lips are stiffening, it is all right just to keep Amitabha in mind. Nor does it matter whether we know about Amitabha’s deliverance or not. That’s because it is not us chasing after Amitabha Buddha, but he who has clasped us, cradling us in his arms.

As to the number of recitations, each day we should recite as often as we can. Why? Because Amitabha-recitation not only expresses our acceptance of his request, it also benefits our body and mind. Though we have accepted Amitabha’s deliverance and will be reborn in the Land of Bliss, our bodies are still in this world. As long as that is so, our minds will constantly be defiled by greed, anger and ignorance, the so-called Three Poisons, and our bodies will experience sickness and pain. Our interactions with others, within the family and in society, may produce annoyances. If we do Amitabha-recitation, such vexations can be minimized and we may meet with fewer encumbrances.

That is to say, reciters will find that everything goes

more smoothly and better karma is created. By reciting often, we minimize our stray and jumbled thoughts. Afflictions are reduced, leading to healthier bodies and fewer illnesses. Our bodily ailments are due to aging as well as past karma. They stem also from our feelings. “Illness arises from mood,” goes a common saying. And mood comprises six emotions: joy, anger, anxiety, reflection, grief, fear and fright. We rely on Amitabha-recitation to curb them – as well as to eliminate karmic obstacles and increase our good fortune and wisdom. That would lead to a smooth, successful life.

Though it’s said we should recite according to our personal circumstances, we ought to cultivate a habit of Amitabha-recitation. We should live to recite, and recite to live. We should blend recitation into the very fabric of our lives.

There is a Chinese saying: “Accumulated habits become one’s nature.” Our basic nature is not acquired; it has been part of us since birth. Greed, anger, ignorance, delusion, confusion, vexation and calculation are part of our basic nature. What is least habitual is Amitabha-recitation. Over the course of a day, our recitations are

few but our delusions and confused thoughts are many. Says the *Purification and Deliverance of Bodhisattvas Sutra*: “Every day, in each person’s mind, there arise 84,000 delusive thoughts. Each generates karma leading to rebirth in the Three Wretched Realms.” The number 84,000 signifies a vast amount, as many as grains of sand on the ground.

There is a story that took place in Japan about 70 or 80 years ago. An old lady went to a hospital to be examined for stomach pain. The doctor told her she had final-stage stomach cancer. Medical treatment was backward at the time. The doctor said she hadn’t long to live, perhaps a few weeks. If she agreed to donate her body to the medical school, all her expenses would be waived and she would receive the best care, including specialist nursing.

The old lady replied, good, I accept your kind offer since I have no money to pay. Then she gave the doctor everything she had -- 30 yen – as supplementary expenses. After hospitalization for a week, a month, two months ... the old lady seemed just fine, and the color was returning to her face. The hospital doctors wondered

whether there had been a misdiagnosis. So they repeated the diagnostic procedures. The conclusion was the same: the old woman indeed had final-stage stomach cancer. The hospital gave her no medicine, as none were suitable. But why was her condition getting better and better?

The doctors questioned her. It turned out that since her admission to the hospital, she had held a grateful attitude, happy for her good fortune. Despite developing such a disease at an advanced age, she was receiving such excellent treatment. She thought that the doctor was like Amitabha Buddha, the nurses were Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and the other caregivers were Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta. She accepted it all gratefully, and thought of Amitabha Buddha and recited his name. As a result, the negative karma that caused the disease was eradicated and her health improved.

The hospital’s doctors and nurses then said to themselves: We should recite Amitabha’s name too.

Curing diseases requires more than medicine. No matter how effective the medical treatment, patients who are distressed, feel wronged and harbor grievances are not going to get well.

The lesson of the story is that we must learn to relax and try our best to be content and grateful. We should avoid being calculating and be willing to accept disadvantage. We should be ready to admit wrongdoing, as well as undertake self-reflection and repentance. By keeping our hearts gentle and soft, we will be able to subdue worries and illness.

All things in the Three Domains are created by our minds. Our birth in the human realm is the result of our generating the causative karma in past lives. It's the same with the hell domains. Our past performance of the associated karma leads to rebirth there. The Three Domains and Six Realms are projections of our consciousness; their roots lie in our minds.

In Buddhist practice, it's generally said that if a person's mind is liberated, he or she is freed from the cycle of rebirth. If our mind is purified, our world becomes a pure land. But we are unable to achieve this. For our minds are "turbid," as we dwell in a "World of the Five Turbidities." That is the fundamental nature of our world. So while the principle is correct that a pure mind purifies and obviates the rebirth cycle, there is no

way we can achieve such a state through our own efforts. But we can easily accept Amitabha Buddha's deliverance and recite Amitabha's name.

Besides Amitabha-recitation, so long as we are physically present in this world, we should cultivate qualities described in the Worldly Truths of Attributes of the Pure Land School: "be modest and amiable." "Amiable" means to be soft, peaceful, tranquil, harmonious and gentle. It is very important to be amiable, as that allows us to be loving and compassionate. It requires modesty, which is to be polite and respectful. To be always mindful of our own inadequacies and flaws while esteeming others is to "be modest and amiable." We should treat all people like that. As the saying goes, "Those who love others are always loved in return." If we respect others, they will respect and cherish us. That's the way to create a cycle of positive karma and harmony between ourselves and others

We are learning the "easy path" of Pure Land Buddhism, centered on other power. All the more should we treat others in a modest, amiable manner and avoid quarrelling with them. When karmic conditions aren't

ripe, they inevitably will challenge us if we speak to them about the Pure Land path. And they will not accept the message if we lack knowledge, articulateness or probity.

Shakyamuni Buddha told us that the Pure Land path is “difficult to believe.” So if we want to teach it, we should take account of the other party’s capabilities and karmic conditions. And we need to be modest and amiable. Such virtues will endear us to others and make them more receptive to what we say. To sum up, the ability to teach and transform others depends less on our eloquence or learning than on our virtue. If our words and deeds are modest and amiable, others will naturally be touched and approve of them. Additionally, our conduct must be measured and appropriate to the circumstances. We should refrain from speaking frivolously.

The mind may be formless, but all forms arise from it. For instance, our bodies, chairs, tables, houses ... all are creations of our mind. Why? Because, everything that exists is neither fixed nor unchanging. Things arise from combinations of karmic conditions. When the conditions change or vanish, so does the entity, be it our body, a tree, mountains, rivers, stars or galaxies. They

aren’t permanent or changeless. They are temporary and changing all the time. Their basic nature is “emptiness.” However, “emptiness” is not the same as “nothingness.” Within emptiness are all sorts of phenomena, like energy fields in modern science.

According to today’s scientists, everything is made of elementary particles, such as protons, neutrons and electrons. They in turn comprise even smaller fundamental particles including “matter particles,” such as quarks and leptons, and “energy particles.” Energy particles have no form; they are pure energy, and their existence appears “empty.” But such energy fields can give rise to a variety of phenomena.

Modern high technology such as atomic bombs and mobile phones are connected to this energy. A slim handset has many functions – making phonecalls, viewing videos, storing data and paying bills. Though energy has no form, it exists.

The *Heart Sutra* says: “Form is not different from emptiness, nor is emptiness separate from form. Form itself is emptiness, and emptiness itself is form.” Form is matter. While matter may be visible and produce

fragrance and sounds, its true nature is emptiness. Such form is not different from emptiness. So the sutra says that “Form is not different from emptiness, nor is emptiness separate from form.” Actually, it isn’t “not different from.” It’s that “form, in the present moment, is empty” and that “emptiness, in the present moment, is form.” Such matter is inherently energy. And matter exists temporarily; it is neither permanent nor real.

Some might think: If husband and wife, parents and children, friends and relatives weren’t real, would it not damage the fabric of human relationships? No. What we have just said is from the basic, ground-level perspective. Everything in the material world and all living things in it are like that. But we dwell in this environment; we have families and societies that are governed by the rules of human relationships. Only this way can the Sacred Truths and Worldly Truths be fully realized.

Let me tell you a story about the avoidance of disaster through Amitabha-recitation. Recounted by Yang Jingyin, it’s titled “Recitation Stops Traffic and Averts Danger.”

*During the 2011 Qingming Festival, I was driving with my son southward from Taichung city to my hometown to pay respects to our ancestors – “sweeping our ancestors’ tombs,” according to our traditions. There were many cars on the highway, but the traffic was smooth and I was doing 100 km per hour.*

*By the time I reached the Mingjian exchange, a speeding car to my right suddenly cut into my lane. I reflexively steered my vehicle to the left. The abrupt maneuver caused my car to spin and I lost control of it. As it spun 180 degrees, I saw a large truck speeding towards me. In panic, I cried out “Amitabha Buddha!” (Later, my son told me I had screamed the name!)*

*That moment, I was startled to see all cars around us stopped as if time and space had been frozen. Silently, my car spun around three times. Only when things had returned to normal and I was back in the original lane did the traffic begin to flow again. It seemed as though those abrupt events never happened.*

*After coming to my senses, I thought back on those few seconds and wondered what had happened to us.*

*There could have been a serious multi-vehicle accident, a tragedy with cars wrecked and people killed. Yet, during that moment of danger and fear, a recitation of Amitabha's name seemed to have pulled us to safety. Suspended in the air, we were able to turn around at leisure, see our course adjusted automatically and resume our journey. Our lives, and those of many others on the spot, were spared and disaster was avoided. When I think back even now, I shudder.*

*I gratefully thank Amitabha Buddha for heading off a catastrophe and preserving precious lives, including mine and my son's. Namó Amitabha Buddha!*

It was indeed a miracle. We can imagine that if the mother had not called upon Amitabha Buddha, there would have been a very serious accident involving many cars. The victims would not have been the mother and son alone. The vehicles behind them would have slammed into those in front, causing inestimable casualties.

Why did the mother call out Amitabha's name at that moment? It turned out that she and her husband had been learning Buddhism for some time. Even though they did not yet practice the Pure Land path exclusively, they were accustomed to reciting Amitabha's name. In an emergency, they would quite naturally recite it.

Think again, where would be the mother and son be now if she had not called out to Amitabha Buddha? Says an old Chinese proverb:

“Gold is empty, silver is empty; after death both hands are empty.

“Wife is empty, son is empty; you won't see them on the road to the Netherworld.”

That is a reality of life. But it doesn't mean we should take a passive view of it. On the contrary, we should understand life's truths and face them, not avoid them. Only that way would we be able to solve problems. To do so would be to take a more proactive attitude. If we waited until being forced to do so by an accident or approaching death, it would be too late, and we would still not be able to escape. As with a debt, we should repay

as soon as possible. Every extra day means an additional day's interest. Faced with the inescapable reality of death, we should prepare ourselves as early as possible.

There are 84,000 Dharma paths in Buddhism. Those who can develop faith in the Pure Land way have truly obtained "great benefit." Why is that?

Because Pure Land can be practiced and Buddhahood achieved without leaving secular life. All we need do is to have faith in Amitabha's deliverance and recite his name. It's simple and easy. People from all circles and social strata, good or evil, rich or poor, educated or illiterate, are able to recite Amitabha's name, whether at home or amid social activities. In this way, all Amitabha-reciters can gain Buddhahood, completing their Dharma-learning.

On the other hand, if we follow other Dharma paths, we must leave behind our secular lives and seek a secluded environment, perhaps deep in the mountains, to practice assiduously. Even so, can we succeed? That's virtually impossible, given our capabilities. For ordinary beings like ourselves, it isn't possible to avoid committing karmic offenses. As the *Ksitigarbha Sutra* says:

***Among sentient beings in the land of Jambūdvīpa (the Saha world), not a single act or thought is not a karmic transgression.***

Every thought that arises in our minds creates negative karma. How can we possibly free ourselves from the cycle of rebirth?

Amitabha Buddha understands that the capabilities of us ordinary beings are inferior, that we cannot purify our minds but only create negative karma day after day. That's why he had to spend five *kalpas* contemplating his 48 Vows, as well as inconceivable, countless eons accumulating merit from the Six Bodhisattva Paramitas. Our unwholesome karma is unimaginably large and heavy. But Amitabha has achieved Buddhahood. No matter how weighty our karma, it cannot impede the deliverance of Amitabha Buddha.

Whatever good works we do in this world, they are trivial and not truly virtuous. Genuine virtue stems only from deeds that are totally devoid of ego. Only such merit would allow us to exit the cycle of rebirth and become a Bodhisattva. Good works that aren't ego-free are contaminated and false. In the context of seeking

liberation through self-cultivation, they aren't really virtuous.

Such factors don't mean we should not undertake good deeds. We should. It is a Buddhist's obligation to follow the teaching: "Do no evil, carry out all that is good." Otherwise, we can't even match ordinary people and aren't qualified to be called Dharma practitioners.

In the context of liberation, worldly good deeds aren't genuine virtue. We cannot rely on such works to set us free from the rebirth cycle, and must rely on Amitabha Buddha. While relying on him, however, we should still do good and avoid evil. It's like our body needing food to keep healthy and warmth in winter. Otherwise, we would fall ill. These things have nothing to do with rebirth, but we must do them nonetheless.

Namo Amitabha Buddha!