

The Uncultured Pot-Fixer Attained Rebirth in Standing Posture

In the past, Master Di Xian had a disciple who did not have his name known to the world. He fixed pots for a living, so the records call him “pot-fixer.” He was ordained as a monk but did not receive the precepts. Master Di Xian had him cultivate in an abandoned temple, hiring a Dharma guardian to take care of his daily life and prepare two meals a day for him. He practiced there alone. What did he practice? Only reciting Amitabha.

Master Di Xian was a patriarch of Tiantai School during the early years of the Republic of China (*R.O.C.). I had some affinity with him. My respected teacher who ordained me is 84 year old senior monk Chang Huai. His teacher was Master Tan Xu who was the successor of Master Di Xian. My lineage is passed down from this line.

Master Di Xian was also an eminent monk in the early years of R.O.C. He observed his disciple, the pot-fixer who knew nothing, uncultured, and muddleheaded, was fortunately very honest. Since he did not understand anything, Master Di Xian then said nothing but let him recite the name of Amitabha. He was told neither the benefit in reciting Amitabha nor the Sukhāvātī rebirth in the future. Master Di Xian said to him, “You just need to recite Amitabha, it will surely be beneficial in the future.” That’s it! Not even one more word was said to him.

He practiced in an abandoned temple in the countryside of Ningbo. Being very honest, he practiced for three years strictly abiding to his Shifu’s instructions. His Shifu said, “When you get tired, take a rest. After resting, continue to recite. Do not stop no matter what, just recite every day.” He did as instructed with a very pure mind, never thinking of going out to see the world or something. He truly “delved deeply into one focus and immersed himself with practice for the long term.”

Three years later, he attained Sukhāvātī rebirth with a standing posture. It is really phenomenal! When Master Di Xian saw him, he had already been standing there for three days. Someone went to notify Master Di Xian by walking, a round trip of three days, and he still stood there. Upon seeing this, Master Di Xian marveled and said, “Your cultivation has made your ordination not in vain. Your achievement has exceeded those eminent Masters who preach Dharma and surpassed those abbots of renowned temples.” Why? Because this kind of skill is absolutely the rebirth of top rank, top grade.

Heavy Hindrances Caused by Affliction and Cognition

“Attaining Sukhāvātī rebirth at ease with no suffering of physical illness,” the good roots of this kind of person are extremely deep-seated. He basically was not clear about the benefit of reciting Amitabha and simply believed and rejoiced with utmost sincerity upon having heard of the name of Amitabha. He succeeded.

But we must know, it is impossible for ordinary people to learn from this kind of person. Anyway, I am not capable of learning from him. Upon hearing this name of Amitabha, I have to ask “why.” Why do I recite? What benefits will I get? Shifu said, “You can attain Sukhāvātī rebirth.” “What is Sukhāvātī?” After telling you what Sukhāvātī is, you would ask again, “How do I attain rebirth?” “Bring forth bodhicitta and specifically reciting Amitabha with one focus.” “What is bodhicitta?” You probe to the bottom no matter what. What is this? This is the karmic habit of intellectuals.

People like me have no way to learn like the pot-fixer. What can we do? Take the second route. He was truly straightforward and had neither wandering thoughts nor questions. Since we cannot be as honest and simple without questions as him, what can we do? We must seriously learn sutra teachings to clear all questions until no more questions are left.

Once there are no more questions, we will then believe and rejoice with utmost sincerity. So, I can only take this route. This route is a little bit harder, not as convenient as the pot-fixer’s. Yet in the past, Laity Li Bing Nan ([*One of three teachers of Master Chin Kung](#)) said, “Learning foolishness for my whole life, I still cannot make myself act the foolish way; foolishness is impossible to learn.” Do not regard those who are like the pot-fixer as foolish ones, they seem to be very dull yet we are really unable to be compared with them. It is incredible that they have no wandering thoughts! Since we cannot make ourselves have no wandering thoughts, we must learn sutra teachings conscientiously. After understanding the principles, we can then truly meet the standard of “upon hearing the name” and be able to believe and rejoice with utmost sincerity.

Being honest to you all, I have listened to Shifu's teaching for *twenty* years so far. This route is quite long. Pot-fixer attained rebirth with a standing posture after just *three* years of reciting Amitabha. I have now listened to the teachings for *twenty* years and still have no idea whether or not I have reached his realm that was three years prior to his rebirth. It is really not easy! But we must be resolute in our aspiration and persevere in our pursuit.

Listening to Sutra Teachings until All Suspicions Are Gone

This is also our karma; we have afflictive hindrances ([*Skt. kleśhāvāraṇa](#)) as well as cognitive hindrances. Intellectuals particularly have heavy cognitive hindrances ([*Skt. jñeyāvāraṇa](#)). We ask “why” the whole day and night. We ask endless “whys.” That is our karmic hindrance, we must relinquish it. But it would not work if we force ourselves to let go. We can only let go by understanding the *truth* through learning the Dharma teachings. After clearly mastering it, we will then naturally renounce it. That’s why we need to offer the sutra teachings, it is for these intellectuals. Those who are like the pot-fixer do not need to listen to the sutra teachings, right?

If we still have questions, we must listen to the sutra teachings. If we still have not believed and rejoiced with utmost sincerity, we must listen to the sutra teachings. We are truly grateful that our Shifu has expounded sutras unceasingly throughout his life. What is it for? It is to make those who are not honest become honest at last. Only if one becomes honest, can he then believe and rejoice with utmost sincerity.

Thanks for watching, see you later!