

Don't Doubt Your Master

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Even if someone is your master for only a day, you should regard him like your father for the rest of your life.

The word “Master” carries a weight as heavy as thousands of tons.

The master is the beacon on your path of cultivation, illuminating the road ahead of you. The master is the sunlight in your life, shining upon you, warming you, driving away the harsh cold of winter, and bringing you the hope of spring.

The master is the support you rely on within your heart. When you find your master, you find the way home. You no longer wander, and you are no longer alone. You are no longer just yourself; you have your master, and you have your fellow disciples. In this warm family, you will grow, feel warmth, and most importantly, find direction.

Before finding your master, you may feel lost and confused, like a sailboat in the ocean, battered by stormy winds and dark clouds, without a compass, unable to find your way. Without a master, it's like crossing a desert alone, surrounded by sandstorms, and all you see is a hazy world. You can't see the end, nor find the right direction. Your food runs out, your water is gone, and you are exhausted, hungry, and thirsty, yet you cannot give up. To give up would mean death approaching; you must persist, persist, and persist again.

Think about it—before we found our master, wasn't this our situation? Maybe even worse. It was difficult for us to take a step forward. How much suffering did we endure, how many trials did we go through, and how many tears and blood did we shed? Have we forgotten all that? We cried out to the heavens, but no one answered; we called out to the earth, but there was no response. That feeling was worse than death. Yet, we had to stay strong and keep moving forward, because it was the faith in our hearts that is supporting us.

We had not yet realized the true meaning of life, we had not yet understood the truth of the universe and life, we had not yet solved the issue of life and death, and we had not yet freed ourselves from worldly bonds, broken the cycle of karma, and transcended the Six Realms and the Three Worlds. We hadn't completed our mission or fulfilled our tasks. How could we easily give up? How could we fear difficulties and not move forward? How could we indulge in comfort and pleasure? Countless times we gave ourselves lessons, countless times we cheered ourselves on, countless times we reminded and motivated ourselves. These are the bits and pieces of our journey, serving as tests for us. This also tells us that the "Dharma" is not easy to seek, and reminds us how difficult it is to find a master. We must understand the importance of "respecting the master and valuing the Way." The basis of cultivation is respecting the master and valuing the Way—without knowing how to respect the master, nothing can be accomplished.

Our master has sacrificed so much for us; it's not easy to be a master. How many of us have truly experienced the challenges of being a master? How many of us have really understood and connected with our master? We all think our master is imposing and has so many disciples, and that whatever our master does for us is expected. "After all, you're my master!" We think that being a master is very easy, carefree, and also graceful.

Alas, do we even realize how many disciples there are? Forget about individually guiding them on the right path, helping them understand the principles, and ensuring they truly practice diligently—how can the master manage so many disciples effectively? The master worries that one disciple might stray, or another might become confused and lose their direction. How much care and effort does the master have to put into this!

Do you really think it's easy for the master to guide even a single disciple? The master also bears the great responsibility of delivering all beings from suffering. Do you really think being a master is that easy? Beings are stubborn and difficult to guide; the master must have immense patience to teach them. The master needs to understand them, connect with them, and teach according to their aptitudes, helping lost beings realize the need to turn back, to get on the Dharma ship, and to return home. With skillful means and great compassion, the master saves and calls back the souls of sentient beings lost in the cycle of reincarnation, helping them cleanse the dust from their hearts. Truly, it is great unconditional loving-kindness, and oneness with great compassion.

When has the master ever said to give up? When has the master ever retreated? Your karma is yours to resolve, and your burdens are yours to carry. But when you can't bear it anymore and seek your master, has your master ever shut the door on you? The master has always saved and guided you with deep compassion. The master pities you, saves you with a benevolence heart, and never tires.

It's only so that you can understand the truth and cultivate well. Time after time, the master enlightens you, teaching and guiding you step by step, all to help you board the Dharma ship. Those beings who understand are fine, but those who don't even slander the master. How is this different from the parents who gave birth to you and raised you, whom you failed to repay the favor and instead drove them out of the door? Despite this, has your master ever given up on you? The compassionate light of the master still shines upon you.

Being strict with you, even beating or scolding you, is all for your own good. Have you understood this with your heart? Your master is not only as warm as sunlight, but also as piercing as a cold wind, because without being beaten, you will not awaken. Your master is like raging fire, like lightning, like thunder, and also like the spring breeze—everything is done to guide you to salvation. Have you genuinely appreciated your master's painstaking efforts? When Buddhas and Bodhisattvas guide and save sentient beings, they don't only show kind and amiable faces, but they also show the wrath of a Vajra!

But what about you? How have you acted? You "doubt" your master. Ask yourself honestly—have you ever had such doubts in your heart? Ask yourself—have you been completely sincere towards your master? Ask yourself—have you offered everything to your master? And yet, you still doubt your master?

What is there to doubt? Are you afraid your master will lead you to a mountain of knives? Or are you afraid your master will send you into a sea of fire? Ask yourself honestly—are you worthy of your master's kindness? Even between people, there must be "trust" and sincerity, let alone between a master and disciple. Have you forgotten how difficult it was to find your master? Have you forgotten your vows? Have you forgotten the grace and benevolence your master has shown you?

For every bit of respect you show to your master, your master will give you tenfold blessings. There is no such thing as a master who abandons their disciple—only disciples who lose their true nature.

Everyone makes mistakes—Not everyone is a sage, so who can be without fault? It's not wrong to make mistakes. If you repent, correct yourself, and avoid repeating those mistakes, that is what truly matters. Here, a word to all fellow practitioners: if you have done something wrong to your master, if you have made mistakes or committed sins, don't hesitate any longer. Go to your master immediately and repent. Present your whole heart to your master without holding anything back, and sincerely repent. There is no shame in repenting in front of your master.

Someone who doesn't understand repentance cannot be saved, even if a thousand Buddhas were to appear. Do you want temporary pride, or do you want permanent liberation? I believe that as long as you sincerely repent, your master will gladly accept you, will cleanse the dust from your soul, resolve your confusion and doubts, and return you to your pure true nature. Because that is your "master".

Finally, a note for all fellow practitioners: the first step in cultivation is to respect your master and value the Way. Without respecting your master and valuing the Way, your cultivation will lead to no achievements.

Reverently pay homage to your master as you would to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas!
Reverently pay homage to all the great virtuous and wise teachers as you would to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas!

