



正確的抉擇

The Right Decision

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我今年一直熱切地期待恆實法師來訪明州，因為此地鮮少機會能聞佛法，尤其是說英語的法師。實法師介紹他今年的環球旅行，帶我們「神遊」，見聞到泰國、中國的佛教。今年對我而言特別重要，因為我準備受五戒。去年我在實法師蒞臨時皈依三寶，我當時知道自己也要受五戒，當時有幾個原因令我遲疑，其中最主要的是怕不能守戒。在此現代快速的世界裏要守戒，絕非容易之事。記得實法師在網路上的講經曾說：「電視使我們每天都在五欲中打轉！」，被電視、網路和手機等分心，我們很容易失控。受戒後才兩天的工夫，我驚慌到得坐下來細想，自己前一日是否打了妄語。持戒真讓我察覺自己多慣習打謊，戒令我有指標及正當的理由來改善自我。

昨日，在大學裡為我工作的一位研究生問我戒律的事和為什麼要受戒。我對他很敬重，他工作勤奮，熱切好學，又是獻身的有機園丁，更難得的是他個孝子，在我平生鮮少遇到像他這麼顧家的年輕人。我長考他的問題後，對他說：「我們都需要變化，來度過每一天。」很多美國人都以為在世上度一日，有許多需要：金錢、權力、財產、毒品、酒等等；其他因為飽受戰爭、饑餓或暴行的人，則甚至於分秒也未停下來想到這些東西。相形之下，我的生活真是太優渥，並能隨宣公上人的弟子皈依受戒是何期有幸，我自知這是我正確的抉擇。

I had been eagerly awaiting DM Heng Sure's visit to Minnesota this year. We have very few opportunities to hear about Buddhism here, especially in English. During his lectures at St. John's University, DM Sure took us on a "virtual tour" of some of his trips around the world this year. We had the wonderful opportunity to see and hear about Buddhism in both Thailand and China. This year was especially important for me, because I was planning to take the Five Precepts. Since I took refuge with the Triple Jewel during DM Sure's last visit, I knew that I wanted to take the Five Precepts as well. I hesitated to take the Precepts last year due to a number of reasons, but mostly I felt afraid that I couldn't possibly keep them. It is definitely not easy to keep the Precepts, especially in our fast-paced, modern world. I remember a quote from one of DM Sure's online Sutra lectures, "Television allows us to indulge in the five desires every single day." With our minds scattered by television, the Internet, cell phones, etc. it's easy to feel very "out-of-control." It was only two days after I had received the Precepts that I really got panicky and had to sit down and think about whether or not I had told lies the day before. It really brought to light how often I tell lies, and gave me a goal and proper reasons to change.

Just yesterday, one of the undergraduate students that works for me at the University asked about the Precepts and about why anyone would want to take them. I have a lot of respect for this student; he is very hard-working, has a keen interest in learning more, and is a dedicated organic gardener! But mostly he is a very filial son. I have met few people his age who are more dedicated to their family. I thought for a very long time about his question and I told him, "We all need different things, just to get us through each day." Many people in America think they need different things just to survive a day in this world: money, power, possessions, drugs, alcohol, etc. Other people don't even have a moment to stop and think about such things, they are suffering too much because of war, famine, and violence. When I think about how good my life is, in comparison, and how very fortunate I am, simply to have this opportunity to take Refuge and the Precepts with a disciple of Venerable Master Hua, I know that I made the right decision.