

## 《論語淺釋》

(續)

## The Analects of Confucius (Continued)

宣化上人講 Lectures by Venerable Master Hua

楊維光、劉年聰 英譯 Translated into English by Yong Wei Kwong and Liew Yen Chong

## 【學而第一】

「信」：怎麼叫「信」？信，就是「不打妄語」，說出來就是真的，這是個信，你說出來有絲毫的假，那就不夠信了。這個「信」，是自己也要信、旁人也要信。你單自己信，令人家不信，這也不夠個「信」；你單叫人家信，你自己還沒有相信，這也不叫「信」。信是內外如一、人我一致的，這是個「信」。「近於義」：可是你信東西，要合乎義理的，你才可以信；如果不合乎義理，就不可以信的。

所以《論語》上往後就說過，「孰謂微生高直」，孔子說，誰說這個微生高他是直的？這個「直」，也就是沒有彎曲，我有一個道理給大家聽聽。「或乞醢焉」，有人向這個微生高去要一點醋去，微生高他自己有醋，可是他自己的醋他不給，他去和鄰居要醋，要醋回來給這個人，你們說這個微生高是直、是不直？這個人不是直的。他若是直，他自己有醋應該給人家，他不應該拿著人家的醋去送給人；所以孔子批評他，說他不是這麼直的，他是彎曲的，他轉個彎嘛！所以這是那麼轉彎，叫人相信你。你轉個彎討好人家，這不是信了，所以這就不合乎義了！我沒講嘛？義，是「治事之宜」，就是恰到好處、正是合理；合理的，我們就相信，這是「義」。

「言可復也」：這個「復」，可以有很多種講法。第一個講法就說：「你說的話，豈可以反覆嗎？」這個「復」，可以當「反覆」講。你可以說了不算嗎？你可以說了又說嗎？不可以的。「言可復也」這裡頭，就有一個「問號」在裡頭。言可復也，你所說的話，豈可以反覆嗎？「你所說的話，可以

## Chapter 1: Xue Er (To Learn)

What is the meaning of **faithfulness**? It means not telling lies. If what you say is true, that is being faithful or trustworthy; if there is the slightest falsehood, then you are not being faithful enough. For faithfulness to be upheld, there must be mutual trust on the part of all parties concerned. It doesn't count if you have every faith in yourself but then you cause others not to believe you. The same applies vice versa. To be faithful, within and without are as if one entity, others and the self are identical. **Akin to righteousness**. Then again, you should only believe in things that are in accord with the principle of righteousness; otherwise, you should not believe them.

In a later part of *The Analects*, Confucius remarked, "Who says Weisheng Gao is straightforward?" whereby 'straightforward' means 'not crooked'. Here is a principle that I want to share with all of you. Somebody once approached Weisheng Gao for a bit of vinegar. Although Weisheng Gao had the condiment, he did not bring it out. Instead, he went over to his neighbor's house to obtain some, which he then gave to the person who requested for it. Now, would you say that Weisheng Gao was being straightforward or crooked? He was not straightforward for otherwise, he would have offered his own vinegar to that person instead of getting some from a third party. Hence, Confucius criticized him for doing things in a crooked and roundabout way! If you make twists and turns to ingratiate yourself with other people and attempt to gain their trust, that is not being righteous! Didn't I say this before? Righteousness is 'the appropriate way to deal with matters' as it is perfect and rightly accords with principle. If things accord with principle, then we should believe them. This is called righteousness.

One's words can stand up to scrutiny. There are many ways to explain the character '復' (fù). First, it can mean 'reversal' or 'backtrack' as in "How could you backtrack on your words?" Can you go against what you have said? Can you make a statement and then supersede it with another statement later on? Definitely not! This line; therefore, can be read in the form of a question such as "How could you possibly retract what you have said?" or "How could you say something and mean another?" This is one explanation.

Another explanation is this: If you are a trustworthy person who does

說一遍、又說一遍，這麼樣子嗎？」這是一個講法。

又一個講法，就說你若有信用，做什麼事情都做得對了，你可以再說；再說，那麼人也就相信你了！這也是「言可復也」，你這一句話，可以再叫旁人相信了！這「言可復也」的「復」，可以當「再一次」講，這是第二個意思。你若對這個人有信用，旁人看你有信用了，所以你說什麼他都會相信，這都叫「言可復也」，人家就不會不相信你了。你若沒有信用，你講什麼，人也都不相信了！你盡打妄語、說大話，誰也不相信了！也不合乎這個「義」了！就誰也都不相信，你就想人家相信你，那你是騙人呢！在那兒，你是用這個「信」，掛著假面具，叫人相信你。

「恭」：這「恭」，是「恭敬」，不是「恭維」。恭維，是專門溜虛、拍馬，講叫人歡喜聽的話。有的出家人，就總對在家人現一種諂媚的樣子，有錢的人一來，就對人家畢恭畢敬的：「啊！你真發心啦！你真是大菩薩！你真是大護法啊！」弄得一大堆，把人弄得迷迷糊糊的，也不知這是怎麼回事？這叫「諂媚」。不錯了！就是方才恒蓮說的，「現出一種諂媚」。

這「恭」，你若不恭，那就是驕傲；你恭太過，現出一種卑鄙的樣子、脅肩諂笑的樣子，一見著人就「嘻嘻」笑起來了，不知笑什麼？人問你：「笑什麼？」「喔！喔！」自己都莫名其妙了。你看，這多難看！這「恭」，不是「恭維」的「恭」，是「恭敬」；不是現一種諂媚的樣子，是謹慎其事，對什麼事都鄭重其事的、畢恭畢敬的，絲毫都不馬虎，這是說「恭近於禮」。你就恭維人，也要合禮；你若不合禮，那就是盡到那地方去拍馬屁，來現出一種諂媚，像狗似的，一見著人搖頭擺尾的，這叫「諂媚」。那狗見著主人，就總現出來那一個諂媚的樣子，搖頭擺尾的，表示和你很好的朋友，牠那是諂媚！那狗為什麼做狗？就因為諂媚慣了。那麼牠也慳貪慣了，因為慳貪慣了，牠又怕人偷牠東西，所以人一來，牠就要咬；因為諂媚慣了，所以見著自己的主人，因為給牠飯吃，牠就要搖頭擺尾的現出那一種諂媚的樣子。這不合理的，所以說恭近於禮。「遠恥辱也」：你對誰都存一種恭敬心，就不會有人汗辱你，不會有人對你不客氣；你也不會弄得自己很不好意思、很羞恥的樣子，也不會的。因為你有一種恭敬心在裡頭，所以說「恭近於禮，遠恥辱也。」

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everything right, you may actually offer a different version and yet everyone will still believe you. Therefore, the second meaning of '復' is 'again'. If people notice that you act in good faith to a particular person, they will believe whatever you tell them. However, if you don't, then nobody will believe a word of what you say. By telling lies and bluffing, no one will have confidence in you, as you are not being in accord with righteousness. Trying to get people to believe you when they actually don't is tantamount to cheating them! In such instances, you are hiding behind the mask of 'righteousness' while attempting to win their trust.

In this context, the character '恭' (gōng) means 'respect', not 'flattery'. Flattery is to curry favor with someone, saying things that they like to hear. Some left-home people always put on an ingratiating appearance towards the laity. As soon as wealthy individuals come along, they become extremely deferential, saying things like: "Oh my! How pious you are! You are truly a great Bodhisattva! You are really amazing! What a great Dharma Protector indeed!" All these compliments make people so confused that they can't figure out what is going on. This is called 'flattery'. Not bad! This was what Heng Lian meant just now when she said 'appear as a flatterer'.

If you are not respectful to others, then you are considered proud. On the other hand, if you are over-respectful, you will appear as contemptible, what with hunching your shoulders and smiling 'Hee! Hee!' obsequiously the moment you see people. Should they ask what you are smiling at, you yourself are equally baffled. You see, this is such an unpleasant sight! The character '恭' means 'respectfulness', not 'flattery'. It means to be careful and cautious, treating everything with importance and not being careless in the least. This is the meaning of 'When respect is in line with the propriety.' Even if you have to flatter others, it must be in accordance with the rites; otherwise, you are just trying your best to ingratiate yourself with them, quite like a dog that wags its tail on the sight of people. When a dog sees its master, it behaves in a very servile way, shaking its head and wagging its tail to show that both of them are very good friends. That is flattery on its part! How did it become a dog? It's because of its flattering habit. Moreover, as it is in the habit of being stingy and greedy, it is scared of people stealing its things and so it is always ready to bite people. However, the dog behaves in a fawning manner at the sight of its master because he is the one who feeds it. This does not accord with principle. That's why it is said that when respect is in line with the rites, one is far from shame and disgrace. If you treat everybody with a respectful attitude, no one will humiliate you or be rude to you, and you will also not find yourself in an embarrassing or disgraceful position. Such things will not happen. Since you possess a respectful mind, you are keeping with the propriety and will therefore not be subject to shame and disgrace.

To be continued