

論語淺釋 (續)

The Analects of Confucius

(continued)

宣化上人講

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DHARMA TALK DHARMA RAIN | 法語法雨

【里仁第四】

Chapter 4: Living in a Benevolent Neighborhood

(一) 子曰：「里仁為美，擇不處仁，焉得知？」

【補註】孫果秀

「子曰」：孔子說了。「里仁為美」：里，是居住。這個「仁」，是有仁愛心的人。里仁，可以說是選擇有仁者居住的地方來住，和這些善知識來做鄰居；再往深了說，就是使用一個仁的方法來居到這個仁上，也就是「居仁由義」——以仁存心，以義行事。若能這樣，這就是最好的了！怎麼是最好呢？

就好像《彌陀經》上，佛告訴我們，為什麼眾生應當發願生極樂國土？就是因為「得與如是諸上善人俱會一處」；又說：「不可以少善根福德因緣，得生

(1) The Master said, “Living in a benevolent neighborhood is ideal. If a person chooses not to reside amongst benevolent people, how can he be considered wise?”

【Supplementary Annotations】 Jennifer Sun

The Master said. Confucius said this. **Living in a benevolent neighborhood is ideal.** The character ‘里’ (lǐ) means ‘live’ or ‘dwell’, while ‘仁’ (rén) refers to benevolent or kind-hearted people. ‘里仁’ can be interpreted as selecting a place where benevolent people reside to set up home, and becoming neighbors with such Good Knowing Advisors. At a deeper level, it means using a benevolent method to develop the qualities of a humane person. It is the same as the saying ‘居仁由義’ (jū rén yóu yì) – dwelling in benevolence and righteousness. Cherish benevolence in your heart and conduct yourself in a righteous manner. If you are able to do this, that would be the best! In what way is it considered ‘best’?

It is similar to what the Buddha tells us in *the Amitabha Sutra*. Why is it that living beings should make the vow to be born in the Land of Ultimate Bliss? It is because *those who thus attain are all superior and good people, all gathered together in one place*. Furthermore, it is said: “One cannot have few good roots,

彼國。」善根福德因緣，是平日裡修起來的，不是想出來、說出來的。那麼怎麼修呢？就是要「居仁由義」，用一個仁的方法來居到這個仁上，做應該做的事；還有要多多親近仁者，多多親近善知識。那麼每天做的都是善的事，每天遇會的都是善的人，這不是最美好、最快樂的事嗎？再進一步說，真正的「里仁」，莫過於生彼極樂國土了；既然所居的是極樂國土，所會的是諸上善人，那一切一切不就都極樂了嗎？這可說是「里仁為美」的最高境界了。

「擇不處仁，焉得知」：焉，是個反問的疑問詞；焉得，就是怎麼算得上，哪裡稱得上。這個「知」讀做「智」，也就是明智；這個「知」，還談不到佛教所說的「智慧」，就是世間的聰明才智而已。

你若不選擇有仁者居住的地方來住，你若不選擇這個仁的方法來居到這個仁上，好好來做人處世，這哪裡算是明智呢？那我們是學了佛法的，知道有極樂世界可居住，這是有信了；若是我們還不發願生彼國土，並專一其心來修行，這也是「焉得知？」那可就太沒有智慧了！

【上人講評】

我講學的方法，每一個人有什麼意見？我知道有的人就很歡喜這個方法，有的人就不歡喜這個方法。歡喜的人，就是想向上學；不歡喜的人，就想向下墮落，這是兩種人。這也可以說就是「里仁為美」，歡喜這個，這就是個仁；不歡喜這個，這就是不住在這個仁上。

「擇不處仁」：你要選擇這個方法，你若不選擇這個仁的方法，居到這個仁上；「焉得知」：那就是沒有智慧了！也就是想把你智慧埋葬起來，埋到墳墓裏頭，所以那就是沒有智慧的。

我這個講法，你們大約聽著或者有同感，或者有反感；反感還是「焉得知」；不反感的，就是「里仁為美」了！這是我的講法。

☞待續

blessings, virtues, and causal connections to attain birth in that land.” Good roots, blessings, virtues and causal connections are cultivated in one’s daily practice; they do not materialize out of one’s thoughts or speech. In that case, how should one cultivate? It is by dwelling in benevolence and righteousness—using a benevolent method to develop the qualities of humanity, and doing what ought to be done. In addition, one should frequently draw near benevolent people and Good Knowing Advisors. Now, if the things that one does every day are all good deeds, and the people whom one meets and gathers with are all good people, wouldn’t that be the most perfect and happy matter? Furthermore, the genuine realization of living in a benevolent neighborhood is none other than being born in the Land of Ultimate Bliss. Since the place that one dwells is an ultimately blissful land and the people whom one encounters are all superior and good people, then wouldn’t absolutely everything be ultimate bliss? This can be said to be the highest state achievable with respect to “Living in a benevolent neighborhood is ideal”.

If a person chooses not to reside amongst benevolent people, how can he be considered wise? The character ‘焉’ (yān) is an interrogative particle used in rhetorical questions. ‘焉得’ (yān dé) means ‘how can it be considered’ or ‘how can it be said to be...’ Here, the character ‘知’ is pronounced as ‘智’ (zhì), meaning ‘sensible’ or ‘wise’. However, it cannot be discussed on the same level as the Buddhist concept of wisdom; it merely refers to worldly intelligence and ability.

If you do not choose to live in a place where benevolent people reside, or if you do not use a benevolent method to develop the qualities of a humane person and conduct yourself properly in society, then how can you be considered sensible and wise? Now that we have studied the Buddhadharma and are aware of the existence of the Land of Ultimate Bliss where we can dwell, this is an indication of our faith. If we still do not make the vow to be born in that land and single-mindedly focus on our cultivation, then, by the same token, **how can we be considered wise?** That would be totally lacking in wisdom!

【 Venerable Master’s Commentary 】

What is everyone’s opinion about my teaching method? I know that some people like this method but some don’t. Those who like it are the ones who want to improve in their studies whereas those who dislike it are the ones who want to regress. There are these two kinds of people. This can also be interpreted as “**Living in a benevolent neighborhood is ideal.**” Those who like it are the benevolent ones, while those who dislike it are not dwelling in benevolence.

If a person chooses not to reside amongst benevolent people. You have to select this method. If you don’t choose this benevolent method to develop the qualities of humanity, **how can you be considered wise?** That is simply lacking in wisdom! What you are doing is just burying your wisdom in the grave. Therefore, it is most unwise.

When all of you listen to this explanation of mine, perhaps you may agree or disagree. For those who are not in favor, **how can they be considered wise?** As for those who agree with me, they are **living in a benevolent neighborhood which is ideal!** This is my explanation.

☞To be continued