

# 論語淺釋 (續)

## The Analects of Confucius (continued)



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### 【里仁第四】

### Chapter 4: Living in a Benevolent Neighborhood

沒有說出口之前，他就要加以慎重考慮；考慮什麼呢？他想：「啊！這句話我說出來，我是不是能做到？我是不是能照這樣去把它達到我所說的話？我達不到，不要說；做不到的事情，不要講！」你要是先說出來了——孔子又在其它的一段裏說「先行其言」，也是這個意思；你要說的話，你先把它做出來，然後大家就明白了。你不要自我宣傳，不要那麼盡弄些個虛假的，來做騙人的勾當！

所以古者他的話沒說出來之前，他自己內心就是很羞恥的，有一種羞惡之心，怕做不到自己所說的。這羞惡之心就是仁，就是那個良心；你若沒有羞惡之心，就沒有良心了。你人若不怕醜——怕醜，不是說死要面子，顧面子；就是覺得自己真對

The character 「言」 (yán) means “speak” or “talk.” 「不出」 (bù chū) means “prior to speaking.” Before they said anything, they would consider very carefully. What was it that they had to consider? They would think in this way: “Oh, if I utter such words, will I be able to do it? Am I able to fulfill exactly what I say? If I cannot, then I shall not say it. Whatever it is that I cannot undertake to do, I will not talk about it!” This is the same meaning as what Confucius mentioned in another passage: “Action takes precedence over words.” Whatever it is that you want to say, put it into action first and then everyone will understand. Do not go around blowing your own trumpet and projecting a false front to deceive people!

For this reason, before the ancients uttered a word, they would feel a sense of shame that they might not be able to fulfill what they promised. This sense of shame is none other than benevolence, or one’s conscience. If you lack a sense of shame, it means you do not have a conscience and are not afraid of behaving disgracefully. Fearing disgrace does not mean trying to save face at all costs. It means that you are aware of having done a disservice to others and that you genuinely feel embarrassed. It is not by simply saying: “Hey, I’m sorry about that!” So what if you are sorry? You do not even know how

不起人了，真是覺得不好意思了。不是那種口頭說：「唉！我真不好意思了！」你不好意思怎麼樣？你自己都不知慚愧！那個「恥」，就是慚愧；就是自己生大慚愧，覺得：「喔！這個事情我不能做的！」

好像這個世界有很多的賊，本來要是沒有羞恥之心，誰都可以做賊嘛！做賊有什麼不好？你被我搶來了，這你防守不住嘛！那麼為什麼不可以去搶人呢？就因為有羞惡之心：喔！這是人家的東西，我不可以要的，我不可以隨便不合理就拿來了。合理，我也不要它！所以這是羞。恥，就很羞恥的，還覺得有這樣的行為，我就見不得人了，我沒有面目見人了！

所以我派女界一個團體出去，到那兒欺世盜名，回來，我真見不得人了；所以我願意趕快藏起來，趕快地不要再不要臉了，所以我深感慚愧。可是咱們不妨再接再厲，雖然第一個失敗了，還有個將來；將來有的人就會往正確了做的，所以我又再試一試，不要先藏起來。說是：「今天這個學，這麼樣也是你，那麼樣也是你；你見不得人也是你，你見得人又是你。那究竟哪個是對的？」你慢慢想一想，你懂得就好了。因為我們這兒都在試驗，哪個對，我們大家效法；不對，大家以他為戒，那就好了。這叫「恥躬之不逮」，躬，就是自己；就是恐怕自己做不到事情，我不講。不逮，就是做不到。

你們記得：做不到的事情，我不要講；我若講，決定要做到。好像我有萬佛城，在沒有萬佛城的時候——前兩年我就有了萬佛城了，我始終沒有對人講。惠老回馬來西亞那時候，我對他說過這麼一句話稍微表露了一下。怎麼說的呢？我說：「惠老啊！你回去馬來西亞，你再回到美國來，可能美國的佛教就會改觀了！」他就問：「怎麼改觀呢？」我說：「我現在還不知道，等將來你回來，你就知道了！」那時候萬佛城已經都弄好了，可是就還沒有接收過來，沒有任何人知道；以後他回來，他才知道有了萬佛城。他說：「你怎麼搞的？」我說：「我也不知我怎麼搞的！」

to feel ashamed of yourself! The character 「恥」 (chǐ) means “shame” or “disgrace.” One ought to give rise to a great sense of shame and come to the realization: “Oh, this is a task that I am unable to accomplish!”

For example, this world is full of thieves. By right, if people do not have a sense of shame, anyone can become a thief! What's wrong with being a thief? If I snatch something from you, that is because you let down your guard! Now, why is it that we cannot go around and rob people? It is due to our sense of shame telling us: “Oh, these things belong to other people and it is not right for me to have them. I cannot simply take them without any reason. Even if it is reasonable, I don't want them!” Therefore, this is called “a sense of shame.” What's more, you realize that this kind of conduct brings disgrace and you will end up being too ashamed to face anyone!

Now, the women's delegation that I sent to a particular event went around deceiving people in order to gain a better reputation. When they returned, I was too ashamed to face anyone. That was why I wanted to hide and get over this embarrassing episode. I felt terribly ashamed. However, we should not lose heart from this one incident. Although the first attempt was a failure, there will be another opportunity. In the future, there will be people who behave properly. Therefore, I am willing to give it another try and I shan't hide myself so soon. The feedback was: “However it was, the current way of teaching came from you. Whether you are ashamed or not, it is still you. Ultimately, which is correct?” Think about this carefully. If you can figure out what this means, that is good. Here, we are experimenting all the time. When someone is on the right track, all of us should follow their example. If they are wrong, we should take that as a lesson and learn not to do it that way. That's all. This is called “to consider it shameful if one's actions fall short of one's words.” The character 「躬」 (gōng) refers to “oneself.” This phrase means, if one lacks confidence that they are able to accomplish something, one should not promise to do it. 「不逮」 (bù dài) means, ‘unable to accomplish.’

All of you must remember this: If you cannot undertake a certain task, don't mention it. If you do, then you must carry it out. For example, two years ago, I had already secured the property to set up the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) but I did not breathe a word to anybody. When Elder Hui was about to return to Malaysia, I dropped him a hint saying, “Oh, Elder Hui! You are now returning to Malaysia. By the time you come back, Buddhism in America would have changed!” He asked me, “In what way would it change?” I said, “Right now, I'm still not sure. Wait until you come back and then you'll know!” At that time, the CTTB property had already been purchased but we had not taken possession yet, so nobody knew about it. It was only later on when he came back that he found out about CTTB. He asked me, “How did you do it?” I replied, “I have no idea at all!”