

Genuine Fruits of Studying Buddhism

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In the late 80s and early 90s, until his health deteriorated too much, Ajahn Buddhādāsa gave regular lectures during the monthly international retreats held at Suan Mokkh and then Suan Mokkh International Dharma Hermitage. Usually, Ajahn spoke in Thai and Santikaro Bhikkhu interpreted into English live. Audio recordings are now available from www.suanmokkh.org and www.bia.or.th. The following is a transcription generously made by a Dhamma volunteer. If you noticed possible improvements to the text and would like to contribute, please kindly contact the Buddhādāsa Indapañño Archives in Bangkok (suanmokkhbkk@gmail.com).

I would like to take this opportunity to express my delight that you have all come here in this way. That is that you have come here in order to study Dhamma. I will do everything that I can to help you be successful in this endeavor.

At this first stage I would like to tell you all, that the genuine and true fruit of the study of Dhamma is to realize a new life. This new life is something we must have, as it is completely opposite to the old way of life. This word ‘new’ is ambiguous; for example, we are used to say a ‘new’ car, or even, a ‘new’ wife, which isn’t really true, for it’s the same old car and the same old wife. The ‘new’ we are talking about must be completely opposite to the old. This new life is completely different from the old life; that old life is trapped in the power of influence from positivism and negativism. So the new life must be out from under that power and be free from positivism and negativism. Most people aren’t willing to believe this is possible. Most people can’t accept that we can have a life that is free and independent from the positive and the negative. If you are not quite willing to accept this right now, then please at least be willing to listen carefully with an open mind.

To be a real Christian, to be a good and correct Christian, is to have the new life. Unfortunately, none of you are good and correct Christians; you’re all trapped, you haven’t listened to God’s commandment. When God said not to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, you didn’t listen and, for that reason, you are now trapped under the power of good and evil. Please listen to what God had said and start to follow his commandment in order to be a real

Christian, and thus have the new life.

Nowadays all Christians have eaten this fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and so-called Christians are trapped under the power of good and evil. Where can we find a real Christian these days? Even in the teachings of Jesus Christ himself, there is nothing about this very important matter of removing the influence of good and evil. There are only teachings of loving one's fellow human beings and so forth. So let's go back to the original commandment of God, his first words in the Bible, and let's practice according to them. Henceforth we will know the heart of Buddhism.

Let's go back and review this original commandment of God. God told Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, but Adam and Eve ate it, and since then all human beings have been eating this fruit. We've become deluded, lost, and trapped in good and evil. We've gotten all caught up in this good and evil and for this reason we all must die. God warned us that if anyone ate this fruit, the result would be death. So all of us who are eating this fruit must die. Die, in this case, means to experience *dukkha* – suffering or that which torments the heart and mind.

The good or the positive is not peace, and neither is the bad or the negative. Both of these are different aspects of trouble, fuss and disturbance, and neither of them is peaceful. True peace has nothing to do with good and evil. Real peace is beyond good and evil. If we're interested in peace we must go beyond these things, good and evil.

Therefore if you're a real Christian already there's no need to come and study Buddhism, because Buddhism also aspires to transcend good and evil. If you've already done this then there's no point in studying Buddhism. Now all of you have eaten that fruit, it's in your bellies, and for this reason you have committed the original sin and for that sin, you all must die. But if you are wise, you will search for the medicine that will cause you to vomit that fruit up so that you will be free from it. That medicine is Buddhism.

When we have taken this medicine which makes us vomit up this toxic poison, then we are emancipated. 'Emancipated' means to have passed beyond or be liberated from all that good and evil. Therefore we study Buddhism in order to vomit up the toxic poison of ignorance. Ignorance is not knowing, attaching, and clinging to things as good and evil, and as 'I' and 'mine'. If you study Buddhism correctly you will be able to free yourself of this poison and enter into the new life.

Please don't think of this as an impossible task. If you are thinking in this way, just be patient and give it a chance. Incline your mind to the possibility that this can really happen if you study Buddhism according to the genuine teachings and principles. Once we understand these principles correctly, and if

we practice and apply them in our daily life, then we will experience a new life or way of living. This is something that is eminently possible for all of us, so please give it your undivided attention.

Now let us discuss the activity of studying. To do this correctly we must all become scientists. So please stop being farmers, merchants, civil servants, bankers, lawyers, doctors, teachers, whatever, and become scientists. With a scientific understanding we will be able to study Buddhism correctly. We need to give up being philosophers caught up in speculations, opinions, and theories which have no end. Rather than being psychologists and psychiatrists, as they are in the world these days, who operate only on theories, we must become the kind of psychologists and psychiatrists who are true scientists. Relinquish logic and speculative fields and become true scientists, who deal with the reality of life. In this way we will be able to learn about Buddhism.

Buddhism is not a philosophy, it is a science. Although we may talk about it occasionally as a philosophy, we need to approach Buddhism as a science in order to be successful in studying it.

Most people like to study Buddhism as a philosophy and never have any idea nor do they come close to knowing what it really is. We have to approach it as a science. It's necessary to develop a truly scientific attitude and acquire some perspective if we are to realize Buddhism as it truly is.

Even the scientific approach to Buddhism has its different levels. We can approach Buddhist science as physical science, psychic science, or spiritual science. Here we need to be especially interested in the spiritual science of Buddhism, leave the physical and mental – psychic – aspects aside for now, and focus our attention on the spiritual aspect which is crucial for our lives.

True science must deal with actual existing objects, real things, as opposed to philosophy which deals with hypotheses and ideas which are unreal. Thus in Buddhist science we will deal with the reality *in* our lives rather than mere hypotheses *about* our lives. Ultimately we need to study the reality of *dukkha* – the suffering, the pain and sorrow within our lives. We have to recognize the realities as they arise within the mind clearly and distinctly, and experience them directly. We can then investigate them, experiment with them, and research them in order to see where these things come from and where they are going. Only in this way can we find any success in our study of Buddhism.

Let us look at the study of this thing called 'life,' become clear about it and investigate it fully. Don't be foolish and concentrate on the physical aspects of life – that is the living protoplasm, the cells of the body and so forth. That's not the meaning of human life. That has nothing to do with or very little to do with Dhamma. Instead we concentrate on the mind: the functions, the behavior, and the activity of the mind which takes place in the body or is based upon the body.

This activity of the mind is what we need to study and investigate if we are going to understand Buddhism clearly.

The subject matter, the raw material of our experiment that we will bring into our laboratory is called the *āyatanika-dhammas* (the things that are associated with the *āyatanas*). The *āyatanas* are difficult to translate so we'll just tell you what they are. The *āyatanas* are five groups with six things – objects – in each group. These five groups, totaling thirty objects, encompass the *āyatanika-dhammas*. We will now discuss the *āyatanas*.

The first group are the internal *āyatanas*. They are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The second group are the external *āyatanas*. These external sense objects are the sights, sounds, smells, flavors, touches, and mind objects or mental things. The third group is sense consciousness (*viññāṇa*) – the basic awareness of the mind towards any sense stimuli based on the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The fourth group is *phassa* (sense contact). Whenever any of these three come together and meet – for example, the eye, a sight, and eye consciousness coming together, there is what we call *phassa* (contact). In sense contact there's a sense experience. There are six kinds of contact based on the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. The fifth group are the *vedanās* – the feelings that arise in response to or in reaction to the sense activity. That is, there are feelings toward the eye experience or seeing, towards hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, bodily sensitivity and mental objects. These are the thirty *āyatanika-dhammas*. You need to know these thirty things if you are to study Buddhism. So we begin by learning about these *āyatanas* in order to study Dhamma, just as we have to know the vowels and consonants first before we can go on to learn how to read and write.

In studying these five groups or thirty things, far more is required than just memorizing their names, noting them down in a notebook, and any other type of intellectual activity. That isn't enough. We have to really know them, and this means to know them through our own experience – to study them as they happen in our lives. Everyday all of these thirty things are occurring, not just once but many, many times. We're experiencing these different things each and everyday of our lives. To know them we have to observe their activity and their functioning, and experience them thoroughly as they occur within our lives. Thus in order to study and understand Dhamma, we must observe the internal *āyatanas* – eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind; the external sense objects, the sense consciousness, the sense contact, and the feelings which arise in the mind.

In spiritual matters, in Dhamma, to 'study' means to observe our minds, otherwise we are just fantasizing. That is, we are just thinking about things. Instead we must observe the activity of these things as they are occurring within consciousness. It's here where we study these thirty things; each and everyday

as they occur over and over again, one after the other, within our own lives and experience. This is the basis for our study of Dhamma. Let's start to take a look at them – to observe how they work and function.

We will begin with the inner *āyatanas*, the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind, and then study the external *āyatanas* later. We will study how they work and function and how *viññāṇa* (consciousness) arises. Let's begin with this example: the eye, the eye sees a shape or form, and then *viññāṇa* (eye consciousness) arises. This basic sense of mental awareness arises resulting in 'seeing.' To continue further, with the ear there is sound and then ear consciousness; the nose, smell, and nose consciousness. The same happens with tongue and taste; the body and touches; and the mind and mental objects. This is the basic reality of our own lives, but we never take any time to observe it; we haven't really gotten interested in this thing. Let us now look at how the inner *āyatanas*, the outer *āyatanas*, and the *viññāṇa* (sense consciousness) operate.

We need to understand that within the body and the internal *āyatanas*, there is a system of nerves known as the nervous system. When some external stimulus such as a form or a sound makes contact with this nervous system, there is a reaction – a response that occurs automatically. This happens naturally by itself. It doesn't depend on the existence of a self, an ego, or a soul. This too is the beginning of our understanding of *anattā* – the truth of not-self. There is no self or soul involved, it's just a natural function of our bodies and nervous systems. To stress this further, when the internal and external *āyatanas* come into contact, there arises *viññāṇa* (sense consciousness). Once this consciousness arises the 'I' and a shape come into contact or into a relationship which happens naturally. [24.00 ??] This consciousness itself is no self or soul, *attā* or *ātman*, ego or whatever you want to call it. So if you understand the inner *āyatanas*, the outer *āyatanas*, and the sense consciousness as being *anattā*, if you truly understand this through your own experience, then you have understood these three things correctly. It is also then that you begin to understand or practice Buddhism as a science. If you still think that these things are occurring because of some self, soul, or ego, if you have some self view on these things, then it isn't Buddhism at all. Your understanding wouldn't be Buddhist at all, it would be animism. Once we see that the sense organs, the sense objects, and the sense consciousness have nothing to do with selves, souls, or egos, then we begin to practice science. It is then that we can progress along the correct path and move in the right direction.

Buddhism teaches *anattā*, the truth or fact of not-self, not as a doctrine but rather as a truth that we can realize for ourselves. *Anattā* means that there is no such thing as a self, soul, ego, spirit, or *ātman*. All these terms referring to an individual or a person, based on an egoistic perspective upon life, are all illusions. They do not point to any true reality. Realizing and thus knowing

anattā is Buddhism.

When the Buddha taught, he was teaching this truth of anattā. But we should understand that before there was Buddhism, there was Hinduism or the Brahminical teachings in India. Consequently, when the Buddha started teaching about not-self there was a bit of conflict or contradiction towards the standard beliefs of most of the population. So it was very difficult for many people to understand and accept this truth. But what the Buddha realized was that in order to eliminate suffering from the human mind, in order to free human life from the problem of *dukkha*, one had to penetrate into the fact of *anattā* (not-self). If we are still clinging or grasping, clutching at the idea of a self, soul, or whatever, then *dukkha* will always follow. The mind will then be tormented and it will suffer because of that attachment or clinging. With this in mind, the Buddha saw the necessity in teaching the truth of anattā. This is the genuine truth of Buddhism and not to be confused with some of the Hindu teachings, which do not share this understanding. As an aside, there is something which confuses this whole matter and it is what people call the ‘astral body.’ In Buddhism there is no such thing, there is no teaching about anything called an ‘astral body.’ There is merely consciousness, the awareness of the mind, and there is also what we now call the ‘subconscious.’ Perhaps this subconsciousness has been confused with what some people call the ‘astral body,’ the ‘divine body,’ or whatever. But according to the Buddha, there is consciousness and, if you want, subconsciousness. The concept of the astral body has no place in Buddhism, therefore please don’t accept it as a Buddhist understanding. It’ll only result in confusion and you won’t benefit from what Buddhism has to offer.

So now we’ve studied the science of the first three things; the internal *āyatanas*, the external *āyatanas*, and *viññāṇa* (sense consciousness). Now we can come to the fourth thing. This is *phassa* (contact) which occurs when the three things already mentioned meet and function in co-operation, in tandem. To reiterate an example, there is the internal sense organs, the eye: the external sense object, the sight; and then eye consciousness. When these three come together there’s contact (*phassa*). We can see this for, when sense consciousness is aware, it sees and it knows the sense object through the sense organ operating. This contact occurs countless times every day. It’s happening all throughout our lives, but still we haven’t paid any attention to it and therefore don’t understand it. Many people think it’s merely the sense organ and the sense object reacting together. If we see it in this way, then we haven’t realized what’s really going on. It’s not just two things but rather three, for there is also sense consciousness or the mental aspect. All three of them together is the contact that we need to study and learn about. If we don’t understand this occurrence, then we’ll never be able to control it. Moreover, if we don’t control it, then we get out of control and this leads to all kinds of trouble resulting in

dukkha. With lack of control things get stirred up into defilements, into things like greed, anger, confusion, fear, and worry. We have to understand this *phassa* (contact) so that we can get control of dukkha.

This thing called *phassa* has two levels or two stages and so let's investigate this further. First the eyes see a form – for example, the color pink – unconsciousness arises and there is material contact. The mind makes contact with the color pink through a certain frequency of light waves. This is the first level of contact which is very simple, very basic. But then if the mind plunges deeper into that experience, the contact deepens. Consequently there is a contact with the meaning of the object. So first there's just the color pink, then if the contact deepens, there is the meaning of, say, a rose or something pleasant, desirable, or agreeable. Therefore, with a deeper contact, a meaning to the thing is given. This is very important. In review – at first there's just a very basic level of making contact, of experiencing or recognizing a mental thing. Then if the mind plunges in further, the contact will deepen and there arises awareness of the meaning and value of the mental object.

The first kind of contact (the contact with the material thing), is called *paṭigha-samphassa*. To iterate further examples: light or sound waves can make contact with the nervous system and with deeper contact, some meaning or value would be attached to that thing; if one sees a human shape or form, the meaning ascribed to deeper contact would be that that was a man or woman. This second level or stage, whereby meaning or value is given to the object, is called *adhivacana-samphassa*. The kind of meaning depends on our own experience and perspective. But it is at this level where a problem may arise, whereas at the first level the contact is a natural occurrence. However, a problem needn't occur at this second stage if there's awareness and knowledge about how to control this *phassa*. So to investigate *phassa* clearly, we should investigate these two levels: the *paṭigha* where there's material contact, and the *adhivacana* where there's a mental meaning or value attached to the thing. To repeat, the first kind isn't very important for it doesn't turn into any problem. However, the second kind is of importance for our understanding of Dhamma and how the mind works.

Now at this point there are two further things that we must become aware of. Is the value placed on the kind of contact experienced, a foolish or wise one? This is what needs to be considered next. When the mind is in an ignorant or foolish state, then foolish or ignorant contact occurs. When the mind is wise with knowledge and intelligent at the moment of contact, wise contact occurs. This distinction is crucial for us to investigate. If there's ignorance (*avijjā*) – not knowing, unknowing, stupidity, foolishness, ignorance – in the mind at the moment of contact, then that contact will also be foolish, resulting in attachment, which then leads to even further problems. This all happens because

the original contact takes place under the influence of ignorance, of foolishness. However, if at the moment of contact there's correct knowledge (*vijjā*) or wisdom (*paññā*), the contact would be intelligent and wise; therefore no problems would occur. With ignorant contact there will always be some harmful result in our lives. With wise contact there's the possibility of making the most of the experience and opportunity. So we should further investigate the difference between wise contact and ignorant contact.

When we say 'intelligent,' don't confuse it with the intellect or rather as merely an intellectual matter. This is incorrect understanding, for we can't really trust our intellect because it can easily be deluded. We'd rather use the term 'intelligent' contact in reference to wisdom instead of mere intellectual understanding. It's necessary for contact to be wise, if there's to be a truly profound and correct understanding. When this happens no problems will result from contact. On the other hand, if it's merely intellect and intellectual understanding then, although we may have some ideas or opinions about the contact, we can still miss the reality and thus miss the understanding. This would lead to foolish contact and all kinds of incorrect activity would occur in the mind, which would inevitably turn into dukkha. So be very careful about the difference between wise contact and mere intellectual understanding.

At the moment of contact, if there is mindfulness – the basic ability of the mind to be completely aware and awake to the experience – then there's wisdom, correct knowledge and correct understanding of the things we need to know. There is also ready comprehension – a comprehensive view – as we apply wisdom. If these things are all present at the moment of contact, then that contact will be wise. When the contact is wise, the mind doesn't get trapped within good and evil. The mind can be free of these limited conceptions and beliefs and thus be experiencing the new life. If there isn't enough mindfulness and wisdom and ready comprehension at contact, there's foolishness and the mind can be deceived into good and evil, or desires and attachments which will always lead to dukkha. So be very careful that it is wise contact because wise contact follows the path towards the new life. Foolish contact leads to all kinds of problems and suffering. Therefore we need to study this difference and examine it in our own experience.

Now we'll move onto the fifth thing, the feelings. When contact is ignorant then the resulting feeling will be ignorant. When the contact is wise the resulting feeling will be wise. Let's see what happens with these different kinds of feelings.

If at the moment of contact there's a lack of knowledge or wrong understanding, then there arises ignorant, foolish feelings. So if the object and experience is pleasant, it is taken to be good. If the object is unpleasant or disagreeable, it's taken to be bad. Thus through the feelings ignorance arises.

Things are taken to be good or bad and this is where the fruit of that tree is eaten – right here at the moment where ignorance arises. As the mind is getting caught in the meaning of good or evil, it attaches to either, and this always leads to *dukkha* – to suffering, to mental agitation, conflict, and so forth. On the other hand, when it's wise contact, whereby the sensory contact takes place with wisdom, correct knowledge, and right understanding, the feeling then is wise whether it's pleasant or unpleasant. The mind doesn't see it as good or evil. The mind realizes that everything takes place according to its own principles – the nature and natural laws of these things. Instead of just discriminating between good and evil, as happens when there is foolishness, the mind just sees things as they are. So the mind doesn't bite that fruit and therefore this wise feeling doesn't become the basis for suffering. So examine this, see how the ignorant feeling arises and how it leads to the foolish discrimination of things as good or evil and the problems that follow thereafter.

Let us now see how wise feeling arises and doesn't lead to any problems. When it's wise feeling, the mind continues to function correctly. That is, no problems are stirred up. The mind doesn't make mistakes and so it's free of the burden of good and evil, it's free of all suffering. This is how the feelings work.

Ponder on this question. Were Adam and Eve born when God made the world, or soon after, or were Adam and Eve born when you were born from your mother's womb? What do you think? If Adam and Eve were born when God created the world, then it's not that significant for us because it happened a long time ago. But when they say that original sin has been passed on down through all the generations of human history until this moment, that is quite frightening. In reality, in truth, Adam and Eve are born at the moment we are born from our mother's womb. This is the birth of Adam and Eve. Due to a lack of knowledge when we are infants soon after birth, we don't have any understanding of life or how the world works, we are ignorant, lacking in knowledge and wisdom and so we discriminate things as good or evil and get caught up in this way of thinking. The young infant, all infants, including ourselves, don't have knowledge and so when something agreed with us, especially when we were a child, we discriminated it as being good. If something disagreed with us we categorized it as evil and this became a habitual response and has carried on throughout the rest of our lives. The moment of original sin occurs right there, when the child discriminates what are merely pleasant and unpleasant feelings into good or evil. That's the original sin that leads to spiritual death. As soon as the child has developed enough in order for *phassa* (contact) to occur, that is, when the sense organs and the nervous system are sufficiently developed for *phassa* (contact) to occur, then there will arise feelings of discrimination between good and evil. That's where original sin takes place. This good and evil that we become conditioned to at such an early age is really unfortunate. Good causes all kinds of problems, troubles, hassles,

and fuss of one kind and then evil has all the troubles, hassles, and fuss of another. It's a real mess. It keeps our minds always burning, bubbling, and boiling throughout our lives. It's much better to be free of all this good and evil, to transcend it is to get beyond it, to be out from under this power of good and evil. This is why we need to study this matter of contact and *vedanās*.

This is the original sin, this is the Adam and Eve that is of the greatest importance to each and every one of us even if we are not Christians. All we are saying is that when an infant is born and the sense apparatus is functioning, there will arise contact whereby the child will discriminate between what is pleasant or unpleasant, and then because of ignorance, turns the feeling into positive and negative which becomes good or evil and leads to all the various problems and hassles or suffering of our lives. Before that moment, although that child is alive, before the child makes that discrimination between something being agreeable or disagreeable, likeable or unlikeable, there is no problem. As soon as that distinction between pleasant or unpleasant which then grows into positive or negative, good or evil is made, it's then that the infant's mind becomes trapped within the limitations of good or evil. Neither good nor evil is peaceful for the mind, it bubbles and boils within the mind. So God, out of great pity for mankind, had the intention to warn mankind, and said, "*Don't eat the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. If you do you will die.*" God warned mankind way back in the beginning, but because of our stubbornness and stupidity we ignored the warning.

Buddhism has the same intention – to save mankind from all that suffering but very few people seem to be interested. All of us now have not heeded the warning and we have eaten this fruit. So no matter what situation we are in, if we are wise enough, how are we going to vomit up this poison fruit, how are we going to cough it up and spit it out in order to be free of this?

What we must do is study, observe, and learn how this good and evil, this positivism and negativism arises. We can do that by studying these thirty *āyatanika-dhammas*. If we study these and understand them, then we will know how good and evil arises. With that knowledge, we can free ourselves from this power and influence. It is then that the mind will be free, life will be at peace, and one would experience the new life.

Now let's talk about it in childish terms, instead of the preceding scientific terms. Let's talk in very simple terms of 'gladness' and 'sadness.' Do you think there is any difference between gladness and sadness? Most people think there is and this shows that they haven't understood them yet. Once we understand sadness and gladness, we'll see that there is really no difference between the two. If we are glad and really get carried away with being glad and happy, then we're unable to sleep and food doesn't taste very good. When we're sad, when we're lost in sadness, we can't sleep either and food doesn't taste very good as

well. When we're caught up in these things – gladness or sadness, then it makes it impossible to sleep and eat food in a pleasant way. But when the mind is free of both gladness and sadness, then it's very easy to sleep and food always tastes good. This is a very simple way to look at it. Sadness and gladness lead to good and evil and this enslaves us. This is why God warned mankind to not eat the fruit that leads to the knowledge, the knowing of good and evil. Through that knowledge we become enslaved to good and enslaved to evil and that is a very heavy burden to bear. When we are enslaved in this way there is no freedom. There is only enslavement and suffering.

Why not get out of that enslavement? Why not become liberated, to be free of good and evil, where the mind is still and calm? When the mind is trapped within good and evil, there is no calmness, no peace. The mind is never at ease. However, when still, calm, and free of good and evil, the mind is at peace and at ease. You ought to see which one of these is more worth living. The one that is worth living is the meaning of the new life.

Everyone is probably willing to accept that all human beings in the world like things that are good and pleasant like gladness, pleasantness, happiness, and positiveness. We can all accept that this is what everyone likes. However, when we like these things, we want them and chase after them, we become enslaved to them; we aren't free. On the other hand, nobody likes things that are evil, that are unpleasant, that are negative. So we try to get away from these things and in that way, we get caught up with and enslaved by negativism, by evil. If we were just aware of these evil things without getting caught up in the meaning, being trapped within the meaning of this word 'evil,' then there would be no problem and the mind would remain free. However because of our foolishness we get trapped within the meanings of these words 'good and evil.' This leads us around by the nose endlessly. So why not study these matters and see what the situation is and learn how to be free from all the suffering and pain created by this enslavement to good and evil? God warned us a long time ago in one sentence, but we haven't listened, so we need to start over again and examine the situation.

The old life, is the life that is caught up in good and evil, which is entrapped by them and one suffers because of that. That's the old life. The meaning of the new life is when the mind is above good and evil, free of them and no longer trapped by them. We told you in the beginning that if you studied Buddhism correctly, then the result would be the new life that is free from positivism and negativism or not trapped by good and evil. Please study this matter carefully.

If you are a good Christian then you will not be enslaved by good and evil. Also if you are a good Buddhist, then you will not be enslaved by good and evil either. We have taken some time to compare these two to understand what it is like when the mind is free from good and evil. We have been studying and

looking for this point of commonality between Christianity and Buddhism in order for us to work together, for us all to transcend good and evil, and suffering. We have made this comparison in the spirit of friendship and mutual understanding. If you understand what we've been talking about, then you'll be a good Christian and a good Buddhist and vice versa. Now if you don't agree with that, that's up to you, but this is how we see things and the intention in talking as we have done today is in order for us to work together; to cooperate, so we can all be free of the enslavement to good and evil and have the new life.

If we are going to be a good Christian or Buddhist then we have to be able to control *phassa* (sense contact). If we can't do this, then there is no way we can be good Christians and Buddhists. If we can't control sense contact we will always become enslaved by good and evil. Let's study this area carefully, so that we have sufficient understanding in order to control sense contact. Then we all can become good Christians and Buddhists.

To summarize, we have a little slogan or verse that we like,

“*Dukkha* is born in the mind because we err at *phassa*. *Dukkha* is born in the mind because we err at *phassa*. *Dukkha* won't shoot up if we are not stupid during *phassa*. *Dukkha* can't arise if we understand the matter of *phassa*.”

Finally it is necessary for us as human beings to understand this matter of *phassa* fully and correctly in order to control it, to keep it within safe and healthy limits. If we're still foolish about this matter, then it will always lead into enslavement of good and evil, and our life will become trapped within their limitations and this will result in *dukkha*. This is the subject matter that we ought to pay special attention to if we are going to understand Buddhism correctly and realize the fruit of the new life. This is where the story finishes.

Now you've been sitting for a long time and your bodies are feeling stiff and tired. The influence of good and evil is starting to arise and so we'd better end now. If you are interested please come back tomorrow to discuss *phassa* further so that we can be the master of sense contact.

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