

Meditation Master JinBodhi's Dharma Teachings**The Six Perfections: Generosity**
From “Learn About the Six Perfections”

If we want to transform our fate, to obtain great awakening and wisdom, we must learn to give and share what we have with others. We all should know about this. It means to give what we have to those in need. When there is a disaster, the victims need money and food, we would give ours to the victims. An elderly person who has no children lives alone in your neighborhood; you should take care of him during holidays, by cleaning the house, doing the laundry, cooking, or inviting him to your house for meals. You offer help and care to him. Giving is also offering, to offer and share all that we have.

Then, what is the opposite of giving? Greed. Greed for wealth and lust. Not only I will not embezzle, steal, or cheat, but also I will share and give what I own to those who don't have. Maybe we don't have much and are as poor as them, we should feel empathy for them. Though we cannot offer help, we must feel and have pity for them. We should act this way. It is best to have such feelings and actions. Giving brings us positive effects and energy. Energy is especially important. Giving is to those at the same level as you are or lower, who you have pity for. But to seniors, superiors, or your parents and grandparents, we do not call it "giving." It is called "offering."

The things we offer to the venerated ones, and the emperors, are called the "offerings," such as tea-offering and clothes-offering. So, offering is to the superiors and giving to the subordinates. In our practice, if we offer to buddhas, bodhisattvas, or deities an apple or a flower a day, these are offerings. It is a bit different from giving. Giving to your seniors, parents, and your master is "offering."

Generosity includes offering and giving. It could counter most of our negative psychological issues, such as greed, selfishness, ego, stealing, and killing. So most of the negative psychological issues can be eliminated through offering and giving gradually. We cannot do without wealth in life. When we come across wealth, we will try all means to own it. It is normal because that's what ordinary

people do. Doing what ordinary people do defines you as an ordinary person. For you don't know greater Natural Law. What I am talking about today is Natural Law, or the Buddha's way which transcends it. The laws of nature are about Heaven, Earth, kings, parents, and teachers. The strong bully the weak; the winners take all. That is Natural Law. I am more powerful, so you should listen to me. This is Natural Law, right? The flood must wash you away if you live in the low-lying lands. It is Natural Law.

What is the Buddha's way? Whatever reason he was washed away, we would help him, save his life, and give him food. So the Buddha's way is the way of compassion. The Buddha's way will balance all things in nature. Natural Law is sometimes very cruel while the Buddha's way is compassionate. Whoever suffers, we have pity and empathy for them. Through offering and giving, we cultivate our compassion and love, and eliminate the harm, stealing, and greed. This is extremely important.

Another point is that the more one gives, the more prosperous one gets. We cannot do without wealth. It is indispensable for everyone in life. An individual, family, organization, and country, all need money to survive. In terms of fate, the more we give, the more we obtain. Generally speaking, it is like this. Please don't be petty-minded to ask me, "Master, I've built a temple, why haven't I made a fortune?" You are too eager to reap merit and benefits from your good deeds. We should do good deeds with compassion, not expecting a return. Compassion makes your care and sympathy arise naturally. If some families have a disaster, you wonder if you will help them. If I help an elderly person who has no children, what will I get? If you expect returns, you will not gain any benefits. If he is hopeless, you give him hope and support, that's real compassion and love which gain you real merit and virtue.