

~From the Archives of Teachings by Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche~

TEACHINGS ON THE PRELIMINARY PRACTICES (NGÖNDRO)

Rinpoche sent the following teaching for those gathered to do the preliminary practices (ngöndro) at Dorje Ling in Portland, Oregon, on May 12, 2013.

Part 13

Understanding Impermanence Will Help You Respect Each Other

So please think carefully. Respect each other more and more, and meditate on compassion. You all do understand impermanence and the fact that all living beings are going to die. You are all very smart. I don't have to tell you this. One by one, each and every person, each and every being is going to die. Why? Simply because they are impermanent. Not for any other reason.

All the inanimate things in this universe, whatever they are, are going to come to an end. They are going to be destroyed. Why? Because they are impermanent. Not because somebody smashed them, or because somebody burned them up, or because somebody poured too much water on them and they were swept away. No, the real reason that they are destroyed is simply because they are impermanent.

It's the same with all the beings that inhabit this universe. They are also going to die. Their experience of this life is going to come to an end. Their current existence is going to cease, and when it does, if they have created good karma, if they have practiced virtue, they will be propelled toward a more pleasant rebirth—maybe even rebirth in a pure land if their karma is well purified. But if they have not created virtue, if they have created an abundance of non-virtue, then by the force of that they will have no choice—no choice whatsoever but to take rebirth in the lower realms.

If you think about these points as you start to understand impermanence, then you will naturally begin to treat each other better. You will treat each other with more and more

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~Translated and edited by Shashi Reitz~*

respect. Why? Because you are an impermanent person. Your time is short. And not only that, you are an impermanent person talking to another impermanent person. It's not really worth it to treat them poorly, is it? Who knows when you are both going to die!

So, if you understand impermanence, that will help you have patience. That will help you have compassion. That will help you have loving-kindness. That will help you to respect each other.

If you are disrespectful to each other, you will always create non-virtue. What effects will non-virtue bring about? If you always perform non-virtue with your body, in the future your body will be crippled and useless, uncomfortable, and nobody will want to hang out with you; they will just have aversion to you. If you always create non-virtue with your speech, your speech will be unpleasant and cause great harm to others. If you always create non-virtue with your mind, in the future your mind will be shrouded by the deepest, darkest ignorance—no intelligence, no way to think, no way to do anything. You will be trapped in delusion, just continuously creating more and more non-virtue.

That is the picture: you in the future, suffering, poor, no intelligence, no friends, no television! Think about this. Even if you don't want to think about others, merely thinking about yourself will allow you to recognize why you should not create great non-virtue. And if you want to create virtue, you have to respect each other. Even if you are only doing it for yourself, still you have to respect each other. So sorry.

~ teaching continues in Part 14...