

Vajrasattva Retreat Third Day Teaching

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You are all the children of the same parents. Who are your parents? His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, Penor Rinpoche, Yangthang Rinpoche. Just as your parents give you your body and what you need for this life, your gurus all gave you empowerment, transmission, and instruction, all that you need for this life and your future lives. They are all powerful masters, none of them lacking in blessings. They are the reincarnations of Vairochana, Vimalamitra, and Guru Rinpoche himself. Therefore, have faith in them! Have faith with perfect confidence in their qualities. Having faith in your parents, then you have faith in your family lineage; having faith in your gurus, you have faith in your dharma lineage. Appreciating the qualities of the lineage masters and seeing the sangha, including yourself, as their children, you will treat each other with respect and maintain harmony with all. Dharma practice based on such faith will be powerful; great merit will be accumulated and great negativity purified.

Whether our lamas are far away or close by, either way we need to keep and deepen our faith in them. Either way, we need to guard our samaya with them and maintain our pure view. Usually if the lamas are nearby we have faith and if they are far away, not so much. That is our own stupid ordinary thinking. Just consider--these gurus, such as Yangthang Rinpoche or the Dalai Lama, are enlightened emanations. They can take birth in a single body or a hundred billion bodies simultaneously. You think their blessing can't reach from India to Oregon? You think their compassion for you is any less because they are a few thousand miles away? They hold all the beings in the six realms in their compassion, even the beings in places where airplanes can't go! Do you think they have to try harder to send their compassion a greater distance? The distance from India to here is no big deal to them. You just think that way because of your American bad habit of how you treat your boyfriends and girlfriends, kissing and hugging them for a few months or weeks or minutes and then forgetting all about them as soon as you turn away for a second and catch a glimpse of someone else. The lamas are not cursed with your disease; unlike you, they do not suffer from a short attention span. Their blessings are all-pervasive and their compassion, everlasting.

To the Triple Gem, far and near mean nothing. Whether our faith is weak or strong makes that difference in our minds. Whether our view is impure or pure makes that difference. If we need the lama or the buddhas and bodhisattvas to be close, we need to have faith. When we have faith, they are on our very doorstep. If we don't have faith, we are shutting our door on them. Even if all the buddhas were crowding next to you or right behind you, you would never see them. This happens for many eons because our door is so firmly shut. What shuts the door of faith? Insisting on MY WAY. As long as you cling to MY WAY, your door of faith will be locked. No matter how many billions of gurus pour their infinite blessings on you, you lock them securely out with your obscurations. By virtue of faith, your door will open and you will be able to accumulate merit and purify your obscurations.

When you go to the market, if you have no interest you won't even try to buy anything. Even though you see all the goods laid out before you, if you fail to see how they will benefit you or appreciate their qualities, you won't try to buy them. You have to have interest to want to engage with them. It is the same with your practice: you have to have interest in it or you will never derive any benefit from it. Having faith is like having the money to buy what you are interested in.

Do you think it is possible for the blessings of the great beings to lose their power or for their compassion to falter? Read about the qualities of Guru Rinpoche, Vairochana, and Vimalamitra, and then you tell me. Their qualities are such that our ordinary minds can't grasp them. If you were to see even one hair's worth of the gurus' qualities, your faith would be very pure, deep, and unwavering. But no matter what their qualities, those blessings will only enter your mindstream if it is opened with faith. If you shut the door of faith, however, even meeting and receiving instruction from the Buddha himself face-to-face could hardly bring you any benefit. Scholarly achievement is not necessary, but an appreciation of our lamas' qualities is essential in order to have faith, which is the basis for any effective practice. You can be the dumbest of the dumb but by practicing with faith and maintaining harmony with those around you, still you can achieve realization. It seems that these days everyone is helping each other and keeping harmony. Thank you! This is so good. I hope your understanding and faith are blossoming, too.

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral