

A Gift of Liberation

Course Eight—The Beauty of a Teacher

Homework, Class One:

The Beauty of Taking Ourselves to a Teacher

1) Pabongka Rinpoche says that if two conditions are present, then turning ourselves into a Buddha is as easy as baking a cake. What are these two conditions?

a)

b)

2) What, according to the great Pa Dampa Sangye (ca. 1100), is the price of a ticket to paradise? How long, according to the great Sakya Pandita (1182-1251), does the trip take?

3) Arya Nagarjuna wrote a very special secret work entitled “The Five Steps.” In this he makes a point about our relationship with our Teacher which is quite similar to a correct understanding of the part in the Bhagavad Gita where Lord Krishna advises Arjuna not to be attached to the fruits of his good deeds. Explain.

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4) What very famous and accurate statement did the Kadampa teacher Geshe Tulungpa make about the benefit of serving one's Teacher?

5) In a turn of phrase that we often see repeated elsewhere, a famous secret text by the Buddha called "A Song of the Diamond" states that "It is better to make offering to a single pore of your Lama's body than to all of the Buddhas who have ever existed; who exist now; and who ever will exist." How does Pabongka Rinpoche clarify the meaning of the expression "single pore of your Lama's body" here? How would it apply to your own Teacher?

*Coffee shop assignment:* Please meet with at least one other person—or better, a group of people—whom you didn't know well before this teaching; do your homework together and discuss together any questions you have. Please write here where, when, and with whom you did your homework:

*Meditation assignment:* 15 minutes early in the day, and 15 minutes later in the day, go through a mental list of people who have in the past, or are now, serving as one of your Teachers, in any field of endeavor. Then think of the training that you have undertaken and now wish to undertake from them, and consider what hardships you have had to face, or may have to face in this training. Finally review your willingness to overcome these hardships. Please write here the two times that you started these meditations.