

Traditional Culture: True to His Word

October 27, 2005 | By Qingyan

(Clearwisdom.net) Zhuo Shu was a renowned person during the period of the Three Kingdoms [*i.e. the period between 220-265 when the Wei, Shu and Wu Kingdoms were often at war*]. He was honest and true to his word. One day, Zhuo Shu visited Zhuge Ke to say farewell before going back to his hometown Huiji (which is currently Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province) from Jianye (which is currently Nanjing City). Zhuge Ke asked him when he would return. Zhuo Shu thus told him the time and the day he would return.

On the day that Zhuo Shu was to return, Zhuge Ke invited many guests. But he told the guests not to start having their meal right away. He said, "Let's wait for Zhuo Shu for a while." The guests were all puzzled and said, "Huiji is one thousand miles away

from here and there are rivers and lakes separating Huiji and Jianye. How can you be certain that he will be sure to come back at this time?" While the guests were saying this, Zhuo Shu arrived as scheduled. The guests were very surprised.

Zhuo Ke said casually, "He was not restricted by anybody or any contract, yet he stuck to his word and fulfilled his promise. He truly practiced 'keeping one's word.'" It was just as Yuan Fu taught in the Song Dynasty from his family-discipline book *Yuan's Teaching for Generations*, "Any part of what has been promised must be fulfilled. The time appointed must be abided by. This is called faith." What was promised to other people must be done without leaving out any part.

Why did Lao-tzu say, "Who promises with little caring must lack faith"? That is to say, if you say you will do something, then you should do it. Those who promise with little caring barely keep their faith.

Faith, with benevolence, justice, courtesy, and wisdom are the five virtues that are emphasized in traditional morality. The five virtues are five basic moral criteria that a human being should follow.

Master Li Hongzhi said,

"They meant what they said. If they promised something they would fulfill it for sure. That's how human beings should be." ("Falun Buddha Fa, Teaching the Fa at the Assistants' Fa Conference in Changchun")

So faith is the foundation on which a person establishes himself and conducts himself in society. It is the foundation of establishing a governing policy and a county, and the conducting criteria that everybody should follow. If a person does not fulfill his word, he loses the fundamental criteria of being a human being.

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