

# Live and Learn

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Master Kuang, otherwise known as Ziye, was a famous musician from Jin, one of the states in the Spring and Autumn Period in China's history, from 770-476 BC.

Duke Jinping once told Master Kuang, "I'm already seventy. I would like to learn things, but I'm afraid it's too late."

Master Kuang said, "Why not light a candle?"

Duke Jinping said, "How can a courtier make fun of his ruler?"

Master Kuang replied, "Why would a blind courtier like me dare to make fun of the great ruler. I, your humble subject, have heard that if one is diligent in learning in one's youth, it is like the just-risen morning sun. If one is diligent in learning in middle age, it is like the sun at high-noon. If one is diligent in learning in old age, it is like the light of a candle. Although the light is dim, isn't it better than just walking in the dark?"

Duke Jinping said, "Well put!"

This story addresses the spirit of being diligent in learning: "Live and learn." Think about it. Doesn't correcting one's mistakes and returning to doing good deeds follow the same rationale? If one makes a mistake one should correct the mistake as soon as possible to make up for the loss. If one is overly cautious and hesitates to make up one's mind, isn't

this like remaining in the dark instead of quickly lighting the candle? Isn't it like not being able to seize the moment to return to the right path? The sooner one is back on the right track, the closer one is to the destination. If one simply gives up on oneself as hopeless and continues to take the wrong path, one will move further and further away from the destination. Whether in learning or in correcting a mistake, the light of a candle is capable of illuminating darkness.

CATEGORY: Traditional Culture