

The Three Principal Aspects of the Path Tsongkhapa (1357-1419)

Expressing the Homage

I bow to my perfect teachers!

1. The Promise to Compose

I will explain here, to the best of my ability,
The essential point of the entire Victors' sublime teachings,
The path praised by their holy heir,
The gateway for the fortunate aspiring freedom.

2. Persuading to Listen

Listen with a clear mind, fortunate ones
Who have no craving for the pleasures of cyclic existence,
who strive to make leisure and opportunities meaningful,
who turn their minds to the path delighting the Victors.

RENOUNCIATION

3. The Purpose of Generating Renunciation

Without pure renunciation,
there is no way to end this yearning for pleasures
in the ocean of cyclic existence.
Since craving for cyclic existence tightly binds beings,
So first seek renunciation!

4. How to Generate Renunciation

Leisure and opportunities are hard to find,
life has no time to spare.
Reflect on this over and over again and
overcome attachment to this life!
Repeatedly contemplate the unfailing effects of karma and
cycle's sufferings and overcome attachment to the future!

5. The Definition of Having Generated Renunciation

When you have trained your mind thus and felt no longer
even a moment's wish for the good things of cyclic life,
And when all day and night you long for freedom,
you have found renunciation.

BODHICITTA

6. The Purpose of Generating the bodhicitta

Renunciation though can never bring
the total bliss of unexcelled awakening
unless it is embraced by the purest wish of bodhicitta.
So, the wise, generate the sublime wish for enlightenment!

7. How to Generate the bodhicitta

Beings are swept along by the four fierce river currents,
chained up tight in past deeds, so hard to undo,
stuffed in a steel cage of grasping true existence,
completely enveloped by the total darkness of unawareness.

8. Again and yet again, they are born
In a limitless round of existence,
and unrelentingly tormented by the three types of sufferings.
Think that this is the current condition of all your mothers.
Develop this highest wish, Bodhicitta!

[8a. The Definition of Having Generated the bodhicitta (addition from Pabongkha Rinpoche)

In short, if like the mother whose cherished son
has fallen into a pit of fire and who experiences
even one second of his suffering as an unbearable eternity,
Your reflection on the suffering of all mother sentient beings
has made you unbearable for their suffering
for even one second and the wish seeking awakening
for their sake arises without effort,
Then you have realized the supreme precious bodhicitta.]

CORRECT VIEW

9. The Reason to Meditate on the Correct View

You may master renunciation and bodhicitta,
But without the discriminating awareness
realizing the abiding nature of reality
You cannot cut the root of cyclic existence.
Therefore, strive in the methods
for realizing dependent origination!

10. Showing the Correct View

When for all objects, in the cyclic existence and beyond,
You see that cause and effect can never fail,
And when for you they lose all solid appearance,
You have entered the path that pleases the Buddhas.

11. The Definition of Not Having Completed the Analysis of the Correct View

Appearance is infallible dependent arising
And emptiness is beyond any assertions [of inherent and non-inherent existence];
For as long as these two understandings
appear to you as separate,
You have not yet realized Buddha's intention.

12. The Definition of Having Completed the Analysis

At some point they no longer alternate, come together;

Just seeing infallible dependent-origination
Brings definite realization that destroys all grasping at objects
And then your analysis with view is complete.

13. *The Particular Special Quality of the Prasangika View*

In addition, the appearance prevents the existence extreme;
Emptiness prevents that of non-existence, and
If you see how emptiness dawns as cause and effect,
You will never be stolen off by extreme views.

**14. *Having Gained Definite Ascertainment,
Advice on Pursuing the Practice***

When you have understood as well as the essential points of
each of the three principal paths explained,
seek solitude, my child, make mighty perseverance,
and quickly win your ultimate goal!

