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## THE VALUE OF BUDDHIST ETHICS IN MODERN SOCIETY

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### ABSTRACT:

*Ethics is the life force of society and the reason for human life. The ethics of each religion established based on discipline and religious morality, its firmly secured so that the existence of religion can stand firm in the heart of society, bring benefits and happiness for humans. When the principle is no longer a guarantee on the human being, the rule of that religion becomes a dry dogma, orders that force people to believe blindly, that is no longer valid in society.*

*In a country, if the ethical tradition is always maintained and developed, the country is prosperous and vice versa, in a country where the ethical traditions are not taken care of, the nation will decline. Ethics is the reason for human life when people lose their own life, and they will destroy themselves and all life on this planet.*



**KEYWORDS:** *ethical tradition , life force of society , human life.*

### I.INTRODUCTION :

Nowadays, besides scientific achievements that serve the life of human, technological heights to satisfy their lustful needs, people putting themselves on a path of peril, facing many crises and severe imbalances. Human morality eroded; instead, the flame of desire is burning intensely inside. Because love forever pursuing the trivial sensual objects that people are attracted to the whirlpool of desires. They are suspicious of each other, no one dares to believe in anyone, and some do not dare to think that there exist truths in this

world. People dominated by money, fame, and power, and then bring to each other much suffering, insecurity, and corruption.

With a tangled social reality, ethical issues become more critical and necessary than ever. The ancient religion has always been considered the moral foundation for society; when it comes to religion, people often talk about morality. Currently, not only see faith in terms of morality but also in other aspects such as religious wars, religious power, and more serious is the spiritual crisis. People began to question the moral morality, whether religious morality is still practical

and appropriate to society today? In Buddhism, a great religion of humanity has a long history of more than two thousand five hundred years, with the mission to bring peace, happiness for all species, ethics in Buddhism are valuable for the process building social satisfaction and benefits for human life.

### II. CONTENTS:

#### 1. OVERVIEW OF ETHICS AND BUDDHIST ETHICS:

##### 1.1. Definition of ethics:

Ethics is a form of social consciousness that functions to guide, evaluate, and regulate one's conduct to people, the resolve of interests between individuals,

collectives, and society, strengthening social relations. Ethics is formed gradually and spontaneously in the consciousness of society. It has a lasting inheritance in history as well as a continuous innovation from one generation to the next to suit the conditions new community.

On the other hand, ethics are good tendencies in our minds, which create words and behaviors that make people around us transformed, peaceful, and beneficial. A good thought is always motivated to treat others kindly. If we don't feel bad about ourselves but are not driven to be kind to people, know that we are not profoundly ethical.

Altruistic tendencies considered ethical because they tend to make us take care of others even more than ourselves. Because we are always concerned about people, we quickly discover his suffering, pain, hardship, and illness to find ways to help. Sometimes we help a word, a glass of water, a pill, or sometimes a large amount of money to help people through difficult times. Humility considered moral because that mentality always motivates us to respect people. Disciplinary tendencies also regarded as ethical because this tendency prevents us from boasting to arrive in vain. Thus, Ethics is the inner good but governs external behavior and words. Ethics is a whole of three aspects: Ethical relations, moral consciousness and ethical activity as follows

**+ Ethical relationship:** is a social relationship in which the subject is related to each other's interests and obligations. In society, there are many different moral relationships, and each individual is the subject of certain honest relationships. There are ethical relationships in the family, such as spousal relations, parents and children relations, grandparents and grandchildren, etc.

There are ethical relationships outside of society, such as friendships, love relationships, relationships between men and women, relationships between buyers and sellers, teachers and students, physician and patient relations, etc. All ethical relationships classified as personal-individual good relationships. But there are also good relationships between individuals and collectives, between individuals and societies, between cooperatives and communities, between organizations and collectives. Besides, in a certain sense, it is possible to raise another type of right relationship, which is the relationship between the individual and himself, because in many cases, the individual fulfills a particular obligation towards himself.

**+ Ethical consciousness:** consists of two aspects: moral affection and moral reason. Moral sentiments are those that motivate ethical behavior such as the sense of duty, the feeling of dignity and honor, family affection, friendship, love, patriotism, love, international spirit, kindness, generous attitude, etc. All human emotions arising in good relationships and ethical behavior, are also manifestations of moral affection. For example, joy, shame, regret, sadness, suffering, anger, etc. On the other hand, indifference, coldness, apathy, etc. status reflecting a lack of emotion, emotionlessness, etc.

Ethical reasoning is a deep insertion of thinking, ethical principles, ethical standards, and moral codes of conduct, expressing the requirements of society for the treatment of people. These principles will concretize into standards, and each measure will be concretized into different behaviors because those principles and standards reflect the objective and existing ethical values that live in a society

**+ Ethical activity:** Ethical behavior and action are two different concepts. The response is action, but work may not be behavior. The act is called behavior when the impulse of a specific motive performs it, and it produces a result that is beneficial to life and the development of another entity (individual, collective Social). The evaluation of ethical behavior should be conducted in two stages: the outcome evaluation and the motivation of that behavior. Indeed ethical behavior must be one that not only brings good results to others, to the collective, to society but also the impetus of a good motive.

### 1.2. Buddhist ethics:

Buddhist ethics is based on the precepts of wisdom. It is enlightened by interdependent origination, cause-effect, samsara, and non-self, etc. Buddha teaching is directly or indirectly related to ethical issues. Buddhist morality is based on compassion and wisdom. Because of compassion and not being able to see people forever living in misery, forever causing suffering to each other, the Buddha

raised ethical principles and happy lifestyles for everyone to follow, build a happy life for yourself and the community. Here, the moral lifestyle is not the moral teachings of conduct that need to be following mechanically and passively that needs to be practiced and follow.

Morality is not entirely by a particular sutta but mostly found throughout his discourses. Buddhist morality is expressed comprehensively and profoundly through the following:

*“Do not do evil deeds  
Diligently do good deeds  
Keep your mind clean  
The words of the Buddhas.”  
(Dhammapada sutra, No 183).*

The focus of Buddhist ethics is keeping your mind clean. Buddhist morality is base on precepts, concentration, and wisdom, so one must practice rules to keep the mind fresh. Shakyamuni Buddha, after becoming enlightened under the Bodhi tree, he decided to return to society and ordinary human life with the purpose to bring peace and happiness to people. What the Buddha taught is rooted in experience, circumstances, and specific people. In the same way, the Buddha instituted the precepts to build a morality that underpins spiritual growth and happiness for humankind.

Buddhist morality is an essential foundation in the system of Buddhist teachings. However, the ethical issue of Buddhism originated from the time when Buddha was still alive and taught by him for 45 years. His disciples compiled these teachings into the canon of the Tripitaka.

Buddhism says cause and effect mostly applied to human morality. Knowing that everything that happens is due to cause and effect, not a random result of a spiritual force is created, all caused by man, and then he reaps the fruits. Knowing this, every time a bad thing happens, we are not in a hurry to be happy or panic, but calmly look for the leading cause in us. Knowing that we are the owners of the good and bad purposes, when we encounter the terrible results, we dare to take responsibility, and not resentment.

Buddhism considers the law of cause and effect as a key to help explain all things and phenomena happening in nature and society. It can say that the proper understanding of Buddhist karmic cause and effect would create a sense of responsibility for the individual and organization.

## 2. THE VALUE OF BUDDHIST ETHICS IN MODERN SOCIETY:

### 2.1. Characteristics of Buddhist ethics:

There are three kinds of the characteristic of Buddhist ethics as follow:

**+ Liberation:** Buddha appeared in life with the sole purpose of liberating suffering for human beings and sentient beings. His teachings show people the way to liberation. Ethics in Buddhism are not only morals that build the right person but also lead people to a peaceful, happy life. The lifestyle of Buddhist ethics created based on compassion and wisdom, and the ultimate goal is liberation for sentient beings. Because this way of life helps people get rid of the attachment of greed, hatred, directing people to true happiness.

**+ Equality and justice:** Buddhist ethics is entirely equal. Morality for the sake of serving all sentient beings, regardless of class, or any other power. People who come from any society, caste, or gender all have Buddha-nature and are equally in the lifestyle of the Buddhist Sangha. Everyone gains peace and liberation if they live in this way. Buddhist ethics is base on the cause-and-effect principle. No one can reap that cause and effect, no one can bestow happiness and peace on anyone, and no one can inflict harm upon anyone.

**+ Humanity:** Buddhist ethics is not a dogmatic system that forces believers to worship and believe in a blind, mechanical way. Buddhist ethics always emphasizing people, promoting people, and not having a form of coercion. No one can bless or disaster anyone, the man himself purifies himself. Buddha advises people to come to His teachings to find good things for themselves, good things to live for, not to trust their souls, or to send their souls.

### 3. THE FUNCTION OF BUDDHIST ETHICS:

Ethics are good tendencies in the mind of every person. Ethics is not mere theories to worship but the lifestyles that lead people to truthfulness and compassion. Ethics transform the body and mind, leaving evil to do good, creating a good personality, a compassionate nature, knowing how to do things that benefit us, for people, and all sentient beings. Thus, morality is the first foundation, an essential factor to create a human being with a holy personality, a sympathetic character, bringing benefits to society.

A peaceful life is a life in which people love each other, support each other, help each other, and share each other in times of difficulty and tribulation. Do not come together with hatred. To do so, each individual in society must have a good personality, must know to tame his body and mind, not to let desire arise, must know how to clean the mind. Therefore, every individual in society needs to have a good personality, must have morality, must live in such an excellent way to bring happiness to the community and oneself. Society today has made great leaps in science and technology. It is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, that is to serve the life of people more and more civilized. On the one side, to help the ambitions of man, to the wars that man brings to each other.

Ethics in Buddhism not only advises people not to do evil but also encourages people to do things that benefit all beings. Following this lifestyle will not only bring about happiness for yourself, for all species, but also for building a civilized and prosperous society. We can see clearly in the Sangha during the Buddha's time, which is a pure mass built on a solid moral foundation. Ethics in Buddhism is the catalyst for people to come together, shake hands with each other to make a civilized society, a happy planet.

### 4. BUDDHIST ETHICS AS A WAY OF LIFE THAT BRINGS HAPPINESS TO PEOPLE:

The Buddhist precepts are the moral ethics of life, the standard of the human being. The rule trains people to achieve from a person to Buddhahood. Therefore, to build social morality, we must first build human decency. Buddhism is human-centered to educate, intending to educate each human being fully morally, transforming them from bad to right, from evil to good, from delusion to enlightenment.

The Buddha invented the five precepts and the ten moral precepts. The five rules are not only a practical moral principle for Buddhists, but it is also indispensable for everyone, every age, once humanity wants to build a happy family life, establish a society. Stabilize and create a peaceful world.

+ The first precept is not to kill, it is to respect the presence of all beings, upholding the filial virtue of Buddha.

+ The second precept is not stolen, its respect possessions of others, to live up to conscience and the right.

+ The third precept is not to do misconduct, it is to protect one's own happiness, respect the happiness of others.

+ The fourth precept is to recognize the truth, to remain faithful to everyone.

+ The fifth precept is not to drink alcohol; it is to protect your health and keep your mind clear.

Those are basic moral principles that Buddha has set for Buddhists to practice, to bring happiness to themselves, the family and society.

### III. CONCLUSION

In short, the moral values of Buddhism in human life are practical values that contribute to society. However, in today's culture of modern technological and scientific development, people must also follow a new trend for economic growth, especially socialization, which does not degenerate the morality of Buddhism. Buddhist ethics, along with traditional cultural identity, always associated with deep feelings, pleasant emotions, emotional ethics of man.

Buddhism is transmitted everywhere in the world without a bullet, without a drop of blood of sentient beings. The spirit of equality, humanity transcends space, and time. These superior characteristics expressed strongly and contributed to building a good society. No matter in any country or culture, under any circumstances, the value of Buddhist morality will always shine. Buddhist ethics

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not only to solve all the dark risks in the commune, but it also contributes to building happiness and peace for the present and future society.

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