

Friendship - The Best is yet to Come

Good morning, everyone! This is today's Dharma Espresso on friendship - the best is yet to come. The coffee shop is open again. Did you sleep well? I'd like to tell you a funny story.

Page | 1

When I was about 10 years old in elementary school, there was a class leader who held the title continuously for a few years. His last name was Luu, his given name was Thuan Thanh. He was taller and bigger than me, and very nice. I still remember his face then. One incident took place that always keeps him in my mind.

One day, a classmate did something wrong and was punished. My group of friends surrounded him to make fun of him. Thuan Thanh passed by, stopped and said to me and my friends, "Don't you laugh at him. He's like that now, but he'll be different in the future. Why make a big deal out of such a small thing?"

Listening to our class leader, we all stopped. Sure enough, that classmate never made the same mistake nor was ever punished again. Not only that, he also passed the entrance exam to the prestigious Petrus Ky High School, and later became an engineer. That was something we never expected. We may criticize or make negative comments about someone, never knowing what he'll become in the future and how he'll improve himself. The best is yet to come.

Friendship is the same. Sometimes we get upset when we see a friend doing something bad, so we tattle on that person to other people. As a result, our friend may lose some of his friends. When we tattle on a colleague's wrong doing, oftentimes our tattling, not his wrong doing, may kill him. Just imagine how you would react if someone spread negative rumors about you? Could you put up with it? It seems easy for us to gossip and spread rumors about other people.

I'll tell you another story relating to the concept of "the best is yet to come" so we will always have love and hope.

A woman had cancer and the doctor told her she only had three months to live. She then went to the pastor of her church to ask him to prepare for her funeral. The pastor agreed and told her what song would be sung in church and what kind of ceremony he would perform, etc. Everything was all set. Suddenly, the woman remembered one more thing and said, "Dear Pastor, I have one more favor to ask you. When you give the last rites, please let me hold a fork on my right hand." Surprised, the pastor asked, "Why would you want to hold a fork when you're already dead?" She explained, "In my family, when the dishes are cleared from the table after a meal, everyone would tell me to keep the fork, because the best is yet to

Friendship - The Best is yet to Come

come. Dessert was usually a chocolate cake, a cheese cake, or an apple pie. So I'd like to keep a fork because I know that the best is yet to come."

Page | 2 The pastor was moved to tears when he heard that. He saw that the woman truly had great faith in the Almighty above, and he agreed to her request. When he performed the funeral ceremony, he put a fork in her right hand, as mentioned in her will. Many visitors, friends, and relatives walking by her casket for the final viewing would ask why she was holding a fork.

When it was time for eulogy, the pastor said, "The fork is the symbol that the best is yet to come. That means we should continue to hope and look at life with more generous eyes." His words touched many people.

This is a story that sometimes we should apply in our friendship and human relationship. Oftentimes, we evaluate someone, make comments, and come to a conclusion all too easily. However, who do we think we are and what kind of divine eyes do we have to make judgment? Moreover, we should be careful with our criticism, angry words, and negative comments, because sooner or later, they will come back to us.

The Buddha often said this great sentence: "If you spit into the sky, it will fall down in your face." Hence, we should watch our words, especially words about our friends and loved ones. In our family, we should stop arguing and yelling at one another and express love instead. We should say this, especially to family members: "The best is yet to come. I believe in you." Believe in the people living with you. Our life is full of miracles, and so are their lives. When we recognize this, we should always find ways to express love, and then love will come to us. When we express hope, hope will come, and we won't despair. So many people are living in despair, but if we think it over, we should always have hope and bring hope to people around us which they really need in this crazy life.

Thank you for listening. I wish you a day of joy and wakefulness.

Dharma Master Heng Chang

(Translated and transcribed by Compassionate Service Society)