



BUDDHIST CHURCH OF MARYSVILLE

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Hiking the Path, with Team Castle Hiking at home, Number 12.

Rev. Tim's theme for 2021 is simply: BE YOURSELF!

In the last Hiking article, I wrote about the Four Noble Truths. Specifically, I focused on the second of the Four Noble Truths in that our lives are made difficult because we don't like change and we want to hold on to things just as they are. Fortunately, the Four Noble Truths also outline a path for all of us to walk that allows us to deal with all of the change in our lives. This path is of course, the Eight-fold Path.

So what to talk about this month?

I guess I will talk about the Eight-fold Path!

Towards the end of 2020, I was again very fortunate to play just a small part in the Sacramento Betsuin's Metta/Padma class. This class is taught annually to the 4th grade Girl and Cub Scouts. This is a "basics of Buddhism" class, but don't let the 9 year old students make you think this is "Dharma-light". Among other topics, there is very deep discussion of the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold Path. Every year, almost without fail, one of the students will ask "What is the most important of the Eight-fold Path?" Or, my favorite, "What is YOUR favorite of the Eight-fold Path?"

I remember in a Dharma Message that I gave a couple of years ago about wanting to add "Right Humor" to the Eight-fold Path, but I figured that something that has been around for hundreds of years just shouldn't be messed with. So the answer that I give these students is simple, without a good foundation, anything we build on top of the foundation will fail. So, I believe that Right View (I shall see things as they are) is the most important as it provides this stable foundation for the rest of the Eight-fold Path.

It is also important to explain what is meant by "Right". This is an important thing to talk about because I believe it is easy to think about the term "right" in the context of right vs. wrong or good vs.

bad. This is NOT the Right we are talking about. Right view is simply being able to open our Dharma-eyes and see things as they are, as if we were enlightened as the Buddha was. It is able to see all things around us with change and oneness as our guide. If we are able to see things as they are, with our teachings of change and oneness always in our heart and mind, then we will have Right View.

Now with a solid foundation we can then build our lives upon, follow a path based upon only truth that surrounds us, we then add Right: Thought, Speech, Conduct, Livelihood, Effort, Mindfulness, and Meditation.

I am grateful to our teachers who have passed these simple, yet profoundly important paths down to all of us to walk on. As we have all been home now for a year due to COVID, I think that these teachings of the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold Path are Practical Buddhism that has no boundaries and confinement of our MBC. While I miss our Sunday in-person services and miss our Sangha, we have so much to carry with us on our life hikes that give us a practical path to try to live our lives by. Soon we will carry these teachings back inside to the MBC and we will be together again talking about our lives at home for the past year.

Until we can all be together, let us all remember these simple yet profound teachings, and together let's take a hike as fellow travelers!!!

In Gratitude,

Namo Amida Butsu

Keep on Hiking!!

Team Castle

