

Abstract

“Gratitude” is one of the Lord Buddha’s teachings that has traditionally influenced the way that Thai Buddhists live their lives, and this can be seen in many Thai traditions such as the Songkran festival, and the Ordainment custom. But because of the rapid social and economic changes during the past 50 years, the Thai way of thinking has also changed, and the old simple agricultural life has been replaced by a more materialistic life.

As a result, the way that Thai Buddhists express their gratitude has shifted. Today, some may think of expressing their gratitude merely by giving money or material things. They may not be concerned about the manner in which they have received what they are giving, in particular whether it has been received in a correct way or not, such as from prostitution.

The way to express gratitude correctly is to feel the real love and honour of the benefactor and to try to pay back or express gratitude to the benefactor whenever there is an opportunity. The way to pay back has to be in a moral way, and in this we must use our own internal wisdom.

Thus, there is a necessity to cultivate morals and the correct way of teaching gratitude to children by providing an appropriate education starting in the home and school. The government should emphasize an appropriate curriculum in the school and include teaching ethics to students in addition to merely teaching them how to earn their living. Then children will have a firm grounding in morals and ethics and will know how to express gratitude correctly.

In addition, the media can also help create awareness of the importance of gratitude by publishing articles that help teach ethics and broadcasting programs that help teach morals to young people by planting the correct knowledge of “Gratitude” gradually everyday.