

Confucianism reflection

Religion



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Confucianism Reflection For this reflection, I found myself reading a number of selections from the “ Filial Piety” comments of Confucius. While all of the selections show a reason as to why the parent- child relationship is fundamental to the five Confucianist relationships, the one that I felt highlighted this and explained it the most is the passage that states; “ What is important is the expression you show in your face. You should not understand ‘ filial’ to mean merely the young doing physical tasks for their parents, or giving them food and wine when it is available.”

If we were to look back into the history of China as a people, what becomes evident is that they have a deeply rooted respect for their elders and ancestors that continue to this very day. It is this sense of respect that has created a strong family bond among the Chinese. The aforementioned Confucianist belief conveys the message that respect for parents is not only something that should be done in the presence of others, but it is something that must be embodied in order to be an effective tenet of the human relationship or relationships between senior and junior members of the family.

The idea behind the passage that I chose to reflect upon is simple. My understanding is that children are being trained to know, from an early age, that if one shows respect to his elders, then he will not need to demand that his elders respect him as well. The true respect and family relationship is built when the young generation shows support for his elders, without feeling obligated to do so. It then becomes important for children to understand that showing respect for their elders, and not showing them a bad face is the kind of payback that is expected or accorded to people who have nurtured them since conception and helped them become contributing members of society.

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Parents, are known to do everything that they can for their children up until the time when their age no longer permits them to do so. Once they become feeble and weak, it then becomes the responsibility of their children to sacrifice for and respect their parents until their last day on earth.

Some children these days often show their parents a bad face once they are asked by their elders to perform certain tasks, because of the sense of privilege and self-centered attitude that modern parenting styles have bestowed upon them. Thus showing a lifelong disrespect for their parents rather than showing thanks for the sacrifice that the elders committed themselves to for the benefit of the younger generation. One merely has to refer to the passage I chose and look at the history of Chinese families from ancient times to present, to understand that the Confucian belief is something that is strong and still instilled in the modern day Chinese child through their culture and tradition.

In hindsight, I believe that the concept of “ filial piety” as described in my chosen selection highlights that Chinese children are expected to show devotion and dedication to their parents, which in turn creates a sense of harmony within the family unit. The harmony comes from the reciprocated respect that the elders and juniors in the family learn to have for one another over time and shared activities. These are lessons that the children then take with them into the real world that they function in, and they carry as a character trait into the professional world, where it helps them succeed as individuals and leaders of industry.