AN 7.29 — Non-decline for a Lay Follower

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an7.29/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Numbered Discourses 7.29

3. The Vajji Seven

Non-decline for a Lay Follower

“These seven things lead to the decline of a lay follower. What seven? They miss out on seeing the mendicants. They neglect listening to the true teaching. They don’t train in higher ethical conduct. They’re very suspicious about mendicants, whether senior, junior, or middle. They listen to the teaching with a hostile, fault-finding mind. They seek outside of the Buddhist community for those worthy of religious donations. And they serve them first. These seven things lead to the decline of a lay follower.

These seven things don’t lead to the decline of a lay follower. What seven? They don’t miss out on seeing the mendicants. They don’t neglect listening to the true teaching. They train in higher ethical conduct. They’re very confident about mendicants, whether senior, junior, or middle. They don’t listen to the teaching with a hostile, fault-finding mind. They don’t seek outside of the Buddhist community for those worthy of religious donations. And they serve the Buddhist community first. These seven things don’t lead to the decline of a lay follower.”

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

“A lay follower misses out on seeing

those who are evolved

and listening to the teachings of the Noble One.

They don’t train in higher ethical conduct,

and their suspicion about mendicants

just grows and grows.

They want to listen to the true teaching

with a fault-finding mind.

They seek outside the Buddhist community

for someone else worthy of religious donations,

and that lay follower
serves them first.
These seven principles leading to decline
have been well taught.
A lay follower who practices them
falls away from the true teaching.
A lay follower doesn't miss out on seeing
those who are evolved
and listening to the teachings of the Noble One.
They train in higher ethical conduct,
and their confidence in mendicants
just grows and grows.
They want to listen to the true teaching
without a fault-finding mind.
They don't seek outside the Buddhist community
for someone else worthy of religious donations,
and that lay follower
serves the Buddhist community first.
These seven principles that prevent decline
have been well taught.
A lay follower who practices them
doesn't fall away from the true teaching."